



## Beckett and Associates Veterinary Services, LLC

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### Lyme Disease In Dogs

Yes, dogs get Lyme disease too!

Lyme disease is caused by bacteria that are transmitted to us and our dogs by the bite of a deer tick. The ticks are very small, which can make them difficult to find, especially on a long-coated dog. The ticks need to be attached for about 24-48 hours before they infect their host, so a good tick-repellant product will help to decrease your dog's exposure and you can consult with your veterinarian for the recommended products. And because no product is 100% effective at discouraging ticks, Lyme vaccination is a standard protocol in a Lyme endemic area such as Glastonbury. It can take up to 5 months for symptoms to show up, so your dog could develop Lyme disease at any time of the year, even if you haven't seen any ticks for a while.

The symptoms of Lyme disease that most owners notice include soreness or lameness, decreased appetite, general lethargy, and sometimes an irritable attitude. When we look at dogs with Lyme disease in our clinic, we see a range of symptoms, from just "not himself" to fever, swollen lymph nodes, and severe joint pain. When we see any of these signs, we will usually do a quick blood test in the hospital to check for Lyme.

Luckily for us, dogs generally respond very quickly to appropriate antibiotic treatment. Sometimes this involves injectable antibiotics and a day or two of hospitalization, but most pets can be treated at home. It is important to

complete the entire course of treatment to get rid of all the bacteria. Otherwise, the dogs can develop long-term effects like arthritis and kidney disease which may not be reversible even if we cure the Lyme disease that caused these changes.

