

MIDDLE RIVER VETERINARY HOSPITAL

IT'S LYME TIME!

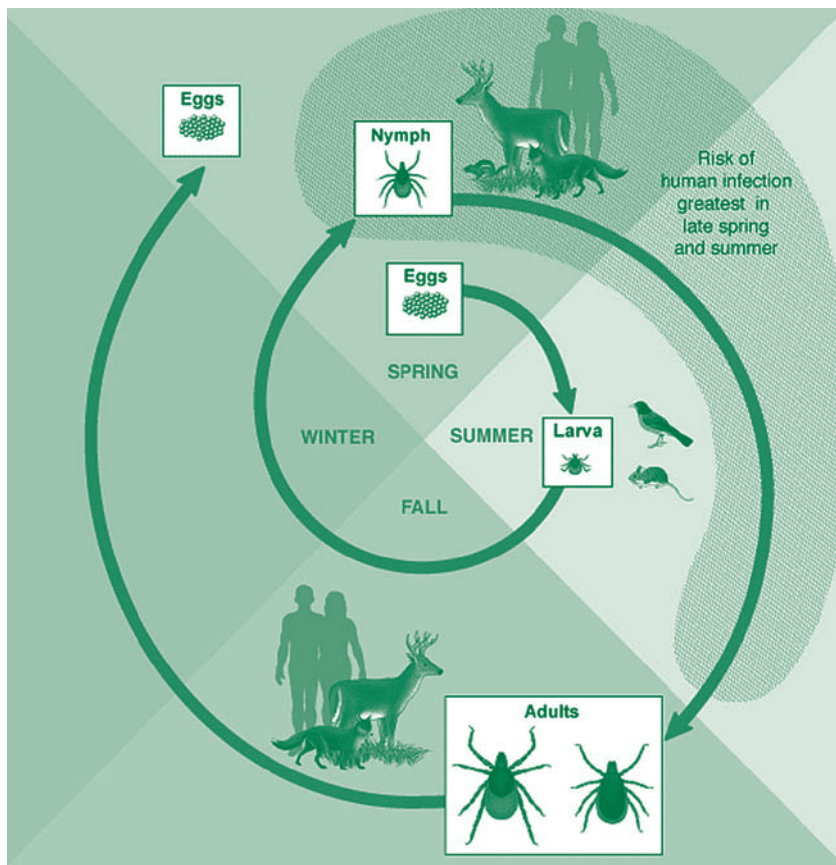
Lyme Disease is an emerging disease in the Shenandoah Valley. First identified in children in Lyme, Connecticut in 1976, the disease has spread progressively south and west. Here at Middle River Veterinary Hospital, we have been screening for Lyme disease in dogs since 2001. Every dog that has a heartworm test done is also screened for several tick-borne diseases, including Lyme disease. In the past 2 years, we have seen a steady increase in the number of dogs testing positive for Lyme.

Lyme disease is a bacterial infection that is transmitted through the bite of infected deer ticks, also called black-legged ticks. It takes 48 hours of attachment to transmit the bacteria, however the deer ticks are very small and can be easily missed, even on relatively hair-

less people. Larval ticks become infected when feeding on infected rodents. The nymph and adult stages can then transmit

the Lyme bacteria. Of these infected dogs, only 5 – 10 % will ever show clinical signs. Even with treatment, infected dogs will remain infected though at a level too low to cause symptoms. The dogs that eventually show a negative test after 4 -5 years actually are still infected, just at a level too low to stimulate enough antibody to show up on the test. Additional testing beyond the 4Dx is rarely necessary.

The most common clinical appearance of Lyme disease in people is the classic red “bulls-eye” rash. This rash occurs in 70 – 80% of infected humans within 3 – 30 days of the tick bite. The rash is rarely appreciated in dogs, but can be diagnostic if seen. This rash is much more extensive (> 5 cm diameter) than the typical local tick-bite reaction we may see in some dogs. Arthritis is the most common clinical syndrome in dogs and may include



Life Cycle of the Ixodes tick (black-legged or deer tick) Source www.cdc.gov

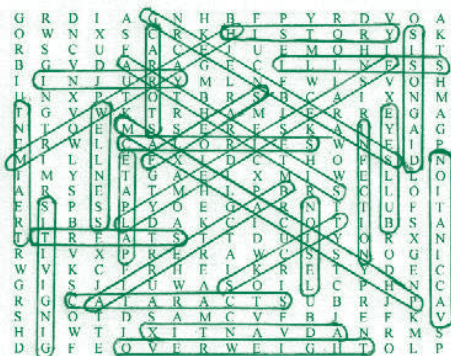
the bacteria to humans and dogs. Cats can be infected with the bacteria, but are very resistant to Lyme disease. In endemic areas nearly 100% of ticks are infected. It is likely about 10 – 20% of deer ticks in Virginia are infected with Lyme, and this percentage will continue to rise.

The 4Dx blood test identifies antibodies that are specific to natural Lyme infection. The test will become positive approximately 4 weeks after infection with

lameness, joint pain, enlarged lymph nodes, lethargy and fever. These symptoms occur 2 – 5 months after infection, and signs will generally resolve with a few days of antibiotic treatment. Lyme nephritis is a rare complication of Lyme infection that causes acute kidney failure and is nearly 100% fatal.

Since most of the dogs that are infected with Lyme disease never become sick,

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Vaccinations: \$\$ Pet Supplies: \$\$
Premium Food: \$\$\$

PHYSICAL EXAM: PRICELESS!

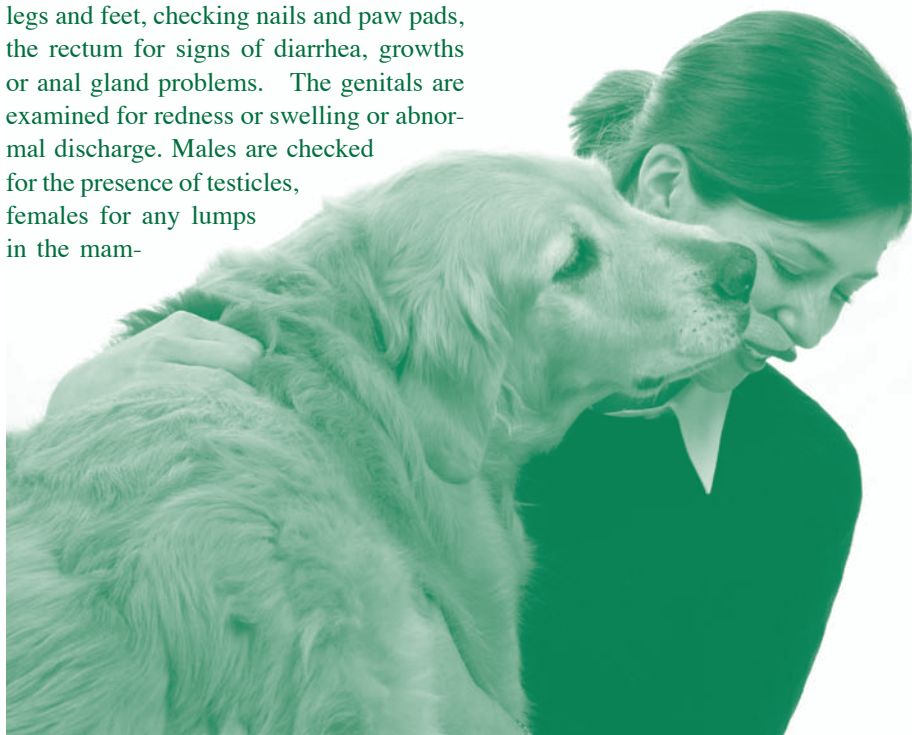
A comprehensive physical exam is the most important part of any visit to Middle River Veterinary Hospital. Whether your pet is coming in for an illness, an injury or a vaccination update, exam findings are the basis for a medical treatment plan. Together with the patient's history, the physical exam is the first and most important step in diagnosing a patient's illness.

Dr. Dobyns will perform a complete, hands-on examination of your pet from head to tail, slowly and thoroughly checking every inch for abnormalities. The skin and coat are inspected for lesions, infection, hair loss or fleas. The eyes are checked for redness, degenerative changes or cataracts, and the ears for infections or discharge. The teeth are checked for tartar, gingivitis or dental disease. She will palpate the legs and feet, checking nails and paw pads, the rectum for signs of diarrhea, growths or anal gland problems. The genitals are examined for redness or swelling or abnormal discharge. Males are checked for the presence of testicles, females for any lumps in the mam-

mary glands. She listens to the sounds of the heart and breathing, and presses into your pet's body to ensure internal organs feel normal and no lumps or swellings are present.

There have been numerous times when Dr. Dobyns has found dental disease, ear infections, heart murmurs and tumors on apparently healthy pets. The information she gains from the physical exam can identify a treatable problem in the earlier stages of disease. Wellness exams are a great opportunity to diagnose, treat and prevent health problems before they become serious.

Your pets count on you to keep them healthy. Be an informed and proactive pet owner so your dog or cat can live a long, happy, and healthy life.



It's LYME TIME!

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there is no approved protocol for treating apparently healthy dogs that test positive on a screening test. Treating an apparently healthy dog with antibiotics is generally not recommended, but in the case of Lyme infection, it may be justified. If your dog tests positive for Lyme on its annual screening test, Dr. Dobyns will discuss with you whether it makes sense to treat your pet with antibiotics.

To prevent Lyme infection, good tick control measures are critical. Apply a good topical tick control product every month all year long to prevent most ticks from attaching long enough to transmit the Lyme bacteria. Advantix and Frontline are both good options. Dogs in tick-infested areas and dogs that swim or get bathed frequently may need more frequent application of tick-control products. Routinely check for and remove ticks from dogs (and people) that have high tick exposure.

Lyme vaccines are available for dogs, and can be used in any healthy dog (even one that is already Lyme positive) that has a high risk of exposure to infected ticks. Clinically ill dogs can be vaccinated after treatment and recovery. The Lyme vaccines on the market now actually kill the Lyme organism in the tick while it feeds on a vaccinated animal. The tick ingests the antibody that kills the bacteria in the tick. It is possible for a high burden of feeding ticks to override vaccinal protection, as the circulating antibody is consumed, so vaccination alone will not be 100% protective. While Lyme infection is not directly transmitted from an infected dog to people, a positive test in your dog is a warning that family members who spend time in the same tick-infested environment as the dog are at risk of contracting Lyme disease. Any family member who develops any of the typical symptoms of acute Lyme disease: bulls-eye rash, fatigue, chills, fever, headache, muscle and joint aches, and swollen lymph nodes – should seek immediate medical attention.

THANKSGIVING HOURS: Thanksgiving Day, Nov 26: Closed Friday Nov 27: Closed

CHRISTMAS HOURS: Thursday Dec 24: Closing at noon Friday Dec 25: Closed

NEW YEARS HOURS: Thursday Dec 31: Closing at noon Friday Jan 1: Closed

To EAT OR NOT TO EAT



Many pet owners don't realize how few calories their pet actually needs to consume in a day. On average, a 10 lb cat needs approximately 275 calories, a 10 lb dog needs 300 calories, a 20 lb dog needs 500 calories, and a 50 lb dog needs 1,200 calories. If you want to feed your pet treats in addition to his or her regular diet, it's best to calculate the number of calories in the treats you feed each day and give your pet that much less of the regular food. Many commercial pet treats are very high in calories and 1 or 2 treats can easily contain half or more of your pet's total daily caloric needs. Buying your pet low calorie treats is also helpful when you're trying to get your pet to shed a few pounds. Unsure if your pet is overweight?

Your pet is at a healthy weight if...

- Ribs are easily felt
- Stomach doesn't sag
- Waist is easily noted when viewed from above

Your pet is overweight if...

- Ribs are difficult to feel under the fat
- Stomach sags
- Back is broad and flat
- Waist is barely visible or absent

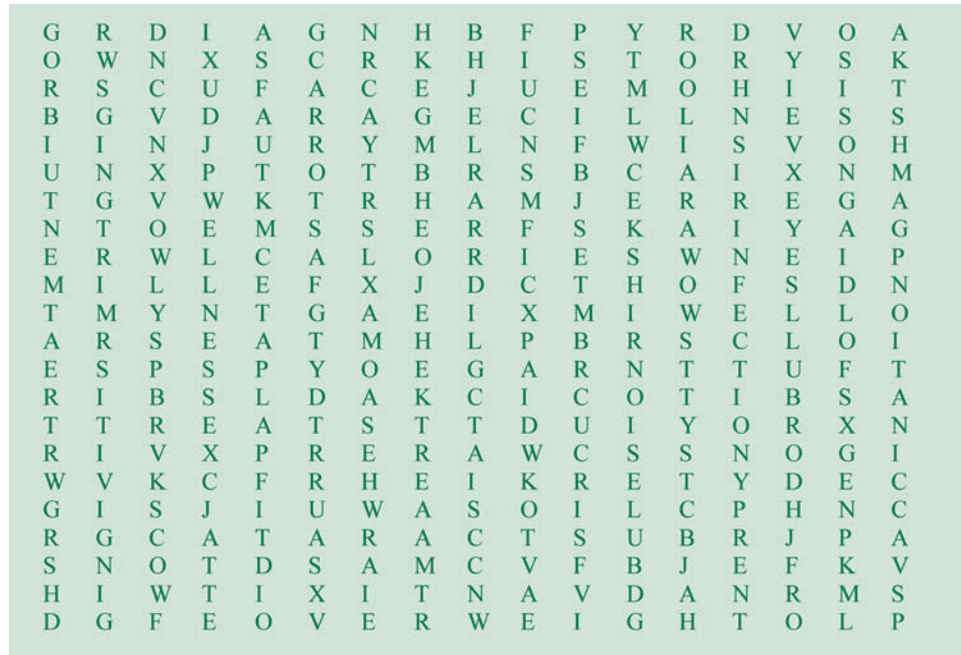
Another option to help you give your pet healthy, low calorie treats is to feed them alternate treats like fruits and veggies! Many are safe for your pet in moderation. Following is a list of foods that are acceptable to feed your pet and foods that could make them sick.

Safe Treats For Your Pet

- Apple (remove the core)
- Banana without peel (try freezing them!)
- Carrots, cauliflower, cheerios, cucumber
- Green Beans – raw
- Kiwi, kidney beans (boil the beans)
- Lettuce
- Mango
- Peanut butter
- Plain popcorn (no salt or butter)
- Rice (boiled white rice), plain rice cakes
- Snow peas, sugar snap peas
- Tangerine (seedless)
- Watermelon (seedless)
- Yams (raw is better)
- Zucchini

Foods Not to Give Your Pet

- NO alcohol
- NO avocados
- NO bones
- NO chocolate, coffee
- NO dairy products, donuts, or dates
- NO fat
- NO grapes
- NO hops
- NO ice cubes or ice cream
- NO jasmine, jalapenos, or jambalaya
- NO macadamia nuts or mushrooms
- NO nutmeg
- NO onions
- NO peppers
- NO raisins or rhubarb
- NO green tomatoes
- NO xylitol
- NO yeast dough



- Green beans
- Lyme Disease
- Heartworm
- Ticks
- Bacteria
- Infection
- Arthritis
- Palpate
- Calories
- Gingivitis
- Illness
- Injury
- Lesion

- Physical Exam
- Treatment
- History
- Diagnosis
- Wellness
- Vaccination
- Bullseye
- Advantix
- Carrots
- Overweight
- Treats
- Cataracts
- Fleas



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Tue., Wed. & Fri. 7:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m.

MEET THE STAFF

Dr. Kathryn Dobyns

Dr. Dobyns is our only full-time veterinarian. She serves on the Boards of Directors of Cats Cradle and The Mosby Foundation. In her free time, she plays violin with the Rockbridge Community Symphony Orchestra and volunteers at Augusta Health and at Verona Elementary School with her therapy dog, Ripton. She is starting agility training with her 2 year old mutt, Hunter. She also has 1 black cat, Shiloh, and retired hospital kitty Weebles-Wobbles.

Tish Holden

Tish is one of our Licensed Veterinary Technicians. Away from work, she spends time with her daughter Allee, son Blake, hubby Keith, her Jack Russell Terrier, Poppy, and 2 handsome cats.

Dian Thompson

Dian is our office manager and head receptionist. At home, she and her husband Cecil keep busy caring for their numerous pets on their "mini-farm." On sunny days, you'll find them trail riding on their quarter horses, Jack, Peppy, Kit and Buster.

Marsha Graham

Marsha is one of our Licensed Veterinary Technicians. She also volunteers at the Staunton-Augusta Rescue Squad. Marsha cannot have pets in her apartment, but she enjoys pet-sitting for others.

Heidi Green

Heidi is a full-time receptionist. She spends her free time with her boyfriend Chris and their adorable little dogs Homer, Charlie and Riley.

Beth Vines

Beth is another of our Licensed Veterinary Technicians. She also runs her own pet-sitting business. In her spare time, she enjoys riding her horses and playing with the many other critters on her "mini-farm".

Caitlyn Painter

Caitlyn is a part-time Veterinary Assistant. She is a full-time student at BRCC and she plans to transfer to Mary Baldwin College. She spends her spare time with her boyfriend Geoff. Her 4-legged family includes 3 cats – Coors, Jodi and Alaska – and a black Lab, Casey.

Charlene Braman

Charlene is our newest team member. She is attending BRCC in the Veterinary Technician program, and she will graduate in May 2010. She also has a Bachelors degree in Biology from James Madison University. She spends her spare time with her Labrador-mix Reese and newly adopted cat, Asher.



Spock

Spock lives at the hospital and works as the official greeter. In his spare time, he monitors the hospital and ensures that all the patients are well cared for. Spock also volunteers with the Animal Assisted Therapy program at Augusta Health.