

ENVIRONMENTAL HOME

Announcing 'Tick Hunting Season'

By Dan Howard

For TRIB TOTAL MEDIA

This particular "Tick Hunting Season" announcement is probably not going to go the way you first thought.

The reality is that ticks are doing the hunting for humans and their pets to burrow into the nice, warm victim bodies. We don't hunt them.

There have been countless news stories explaining that the weather this year has been great for the tick population. It's no wonder that readers and viewers care about ticks.

A human taking a pleasant walk in the woods or petting a dog is all that a blood-sucking tick needs to spread disease and misery.

The CDC estimates there are more than 300,000 cases of Lyme infection in the U.S. each year — which is roughly 10 times as many as what is reported.

That group of undiagnosed Lyme Disease victims can suffer for years with the disease.

You or someone you care about could be one of those victims.

Symptoms of Lyme Disease

Early signs and symptoms of Lyme Disease include chills, headache, muscle and joint pain, fever and swollen lymph nodes. The sneaky part is that these symptoms can be mistaken as flu symptoms.

When Lyme Disease goes undiagnosed and untreated, the symptoms can progress. They can be debilitating. Each of the symptoms also can be indicative of other diseases and health problems. This is another reason that Lyme Disease can be misdiagnosed for years.

Some Chronic Lyme Dis-

This female Ixodes scapularis tick is in the process of laying her clutch of eggs. After feeding, an adult Ixodes scapularis female lays 2,000-4,000 eggs.



CDC

ease symptoms are:

- Chronic Inflammatory Response Syndrome (CIRS)
- Fibromyalgia
- Inflammation of the brain and spinal cord
- Headaches and neck stiffness
- Arthritis type of joint pain
- Muscle and heart symptoms
- Rashes

Chronic Inflammatory Response Syndrome

CIRS happens in response to repeated exposure to toxins. This causes the immune system to go haywire. CIRS can be triggered by the combination of mycotoxins, volatile organic compounds (VOCs), and other inflammatory toxins found in water-damaged environments. Lyme Disease is often one of the exposures that underlies CIRS.

The role of mold and other toxins in Lyme Disease and CIRS

Only some individuals are at risk for reacting to Lyme Disease or any mold and biotoxin-related diseases.

Genetic factors, individual health histories, weakened immune systems, viral, parasitic, bacterial or other co-infections play a role in CIRS.

Auto-immune diseases and exposure to mold and toxic VOCs also can be triggers to those diseases.

Some individuals can not recover from Lyme Disease or CIRS

These diseases are the sum total of the factors in a personal health and exposure history. It is not easy to reverse the cumulative health events that make people ill. It can be as difficult to identify and correct the contaminants that prevent patient recovery as diagnosing the disease.

Pros to identify building conditions that make people ill

Mold and the biotoxins common to a building that has moisture issues is the most logical place to start.

This process is more in-depth than simple mold testing. It is like CSI (Crime Scene Investigation) for buildings. Hidden moisture is only one of many possible health-robbing culprits.

There are products, materials, building practices and dozens of factors that can create exposure hazards for sensitive individuals. Hazards can be as simple as improperly installed plumbing or heating systems, or using the

wrong kind of cleaning products in a building.

In one recent case, the use of the wrong type of furniture stain on refinished flooring resulted in a toxic soup of VOCs in a home that was so intense that the results were higher than the chart used by the testing lab. Overuse of a toxic chemical by a remediator was a problem rendering another home uninhabitable.

Simply put, when someone is ill in a building, it takes more than considering mold exposure. Professionals with that level of training are rare and often difficult to find. If you are looking for these types of individuals, explore websites for individuals that have more information than mold testing and deal with sick building syndrome from the building science perspective.

Finding the medical professional to treat chronic diseases

The practice of medicine is rapidly changing. Traditionally, the reversal of symptoms was the goal of practitioners. As an example, if you had a headache, they would suggest that you take something for the headache pain.

There are now medical practitioners who explore the

source of the headache and work to resolve the cause of the headache. These are referred to as functional medical professionals, or holistic practitioners. The approach of combining conventional and alternative medicine is referred to as integrative medicine

In addition to the use of both new and old treatments to correct the causes of medical problems, these practitioners have new research and information to help them recognize previously undiagnosed conditions.

It is not unusual for new patients of functional medical practitioners to have previously had frustrating years of suffering and ineffective treatment. In many cases, prior medical providers had blamed psychological causes for undiagnosed health problems like Lyme Disease.

Many new tests have been developed to determine the exposures that a multiple chemical sensitive individual is experiencing. Many of those tests are available through nationally recognized labs, such as Quest or Lab Corp.

There also are treatments that help remove the toxins that have built up in the bodies of individuals suffering from these diseases and syndromes. Web searches will help to identify the medical practitioners that specialize in this approach.

Finding professionals to remediate buildings

Imagine paying to have a contaminant removed from a home or other building and having the building become more toxic. It happens more often that you would guess.

Many remediators don't

understand the importance of protecting the building and its residents from additional exposures. There are principles of containment, negative air and air scrubbing that should be followed. They always should provide samples of chemicals and products before they are used in a sensitive person's building.

The road to recovery

If you know someone that is chronically ill, it could be Lyme Disease or any one of many other environmentally affected diseases. Individuals with chronic and acute diseases, chemotherapy patients, transplant patients, respiratory patients and many other individuals need to identify and remove toxins from the home for an opportunity for the best possible quality of life and recovery.

The best course is to find medical and environmental professionals that go beyond treating the symptoms and look for underlying causes.

You can find links and additional information about Lyme Disease in the online copy of this article at envirospect.com/lyme.

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