

**MORROW COUNTY HEALTH DISTRICT**  
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For More Information Contact:  
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## PUBLIC HEALTH NOTIFICATION

**SUBJECT:** LYME DISEASE AWARENESS

**DATE SENT:** April 12, 2018

**URGENCY LEVEL:**

- Health Alert - Conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.
- Health Advisory - Provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.
- Health Update - Provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; unlikely to require immediate action.

*Please distribute to all appropriate physicians and staff in a timely manner.*

**DETAILS:**

The Ohio Department of Health has issued a memo regarding the increase of Lyme disease cases in Ohio. The number of cases has increased from 45 in 2008 to 270 in 2017, and will likely continue to rise. This increase in disease coincides with the increased and spread of the primary vector for the disease, the blacklegged tick, throughout the state.

The purpose of this Health Alert and the memo is to ensure that all cases of Lyme disease are properly reported in Ohio. Please see the attached ODH Memo in its entirety.

To report probable or suspected cases, or if we can be of further assistance, please contact:  
Morrow County Health District at (419) 947-1545.

The Morrow County Health District is open:  
Monday through Thursday from 7:15 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and Friday 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.  
Management staff can be reached for public health emergencies and reportable diseases after hours at: (567) 231-9740.

-End-



# OHIO DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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Columbus, Ohio 43215

614/466-3543  
www.odh.ohio.gov

John R. Kasich/Governor

Lance Himes/Interim Director of Health

## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** April 10, 2018

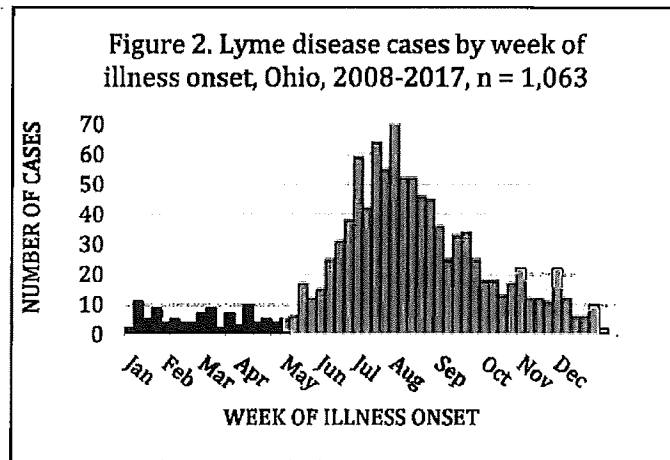
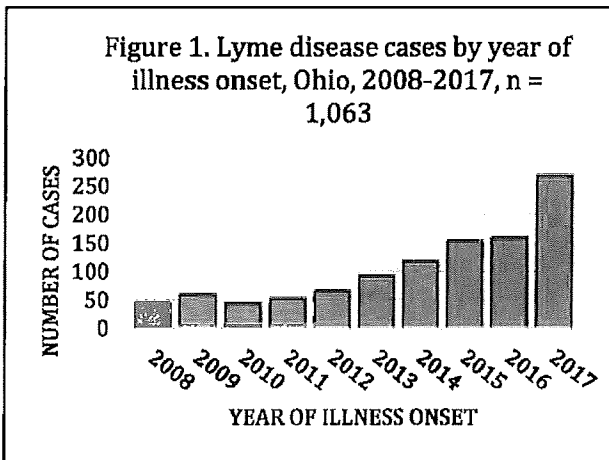
**TO:** Healthcare providers in Ohio

**FROM:** Sietske de Fijter, MS  
State Epidemiologist *gdf*  
Chief, Bureau of Infectious Diseases

**SUBJECT:** Lyme disease cases in Ohio continue to increase

Lyme disease is an emerging disease in Ohio and cases have continued to increase over the past several years, from 45 in 2008 to 270 in 2017 (Fig. 1). This increase coincides with the spread and increase of the principal vector, *Ixodes scapularis* (the blacklegged tick) throughout the state. Lyme disease can be contracted throughout most of the year when blacklegged tick adults and nymphs are active, but most cases occur in the late spring and summer when the nymphs are active (Fig. 2).

### Reported Cases of Lyme Disease in Ohio, 2008-2017



To develop a better understanding of Lyme disease and other tick-borne diseases in Ohio, the Ohio Department of Health (ODH) would like to ensure that all cases are detected. For this reason, ODH recommends that healthcare providers consider Lyme disease and other tick-borne diseases in the differential diagnosis for patients that present with appropriate symptoms.

### Ensuring that Lyme disease cases are properly reported in Ohio

To ensure that Lyme disease cases are confirmed and reported in Ohio, it is essential that there is **both clinical and laboratory** evidence of infection. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends two-tiered serological testing ([http://www.cdc.gov/lyme/healthcare/clinician\\_twotier.html](http://www.cdc.gov/lyme/healthcare/clinician_twotier.html)) to properly test for evidence of antibodies against Lyme disease bacteria. Patients should first be tested by enzyme immunoassay (EIA) or immunofluorescent assay (IFA), and positive and equivocal results should be confirmed by further

testing with the more specific Western blot test. Patients may test negative early in the course of infection, so if Lyme disease is suspected a convalescent sample should also be tested. For patients who have been ill for more than 4 weeks, IgG will usually be positive by Western blot; an isolated positive IgM in this timeframe is likely a false positive.

The following tick-borne diseases are Class B reportable diseases in Ohio, and should be reported to the local health department where the case resides by the end of the next business day after the existence of a case, a suspected case, or a positive laboratory result is known:

Anaplasmosis and Ehrlichiosis (<http://www.odh.ohio.gov/pdf/IDCM/ehrl.pdf>)

Babesiosis (<http://www.odh.ohio.gov/pdf/IDCM/babesia.pdf>)

Lyme disease (<http://www.odh.ohio.gov/pdf/IDCM/lyme.pdf>)

Rocky Mountain spotted fever (<http://www.odh.ohio.gov/pdf/IDCM/rmsf.pdf>)

More detailed information about Lyme disease and other tick-borne diseases in Ohio, as well as information on personal protection and disease prevention can be found on the ODH website (<http://www.odh.ohio.gov/ticks>). Please contact your local health department or the ODH's Zoonotic Disease Program at 614-752-1029 if you have questions.

Thank you for your consideration to improving tick-borne disease surveillance in Ohio.