



## **Editorial: Emphasis on Lyme Well Placed**

**Containing Lyme disease is important to health locally.**

By Mary Kimm, Editor and Publisher  
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With the explosion in the local population of deer comes a smaller but significant explosion in cases of Lyme Disease. Lyme is transmitted to humans from deer by way of a bite from a deer tick.

Deer ticks are tiny, and most often go unnoticed. The first symptoms of Lyme disease are often a fever, flu-like aches and headache. Sometimes victims exhibit a red ring or bulls eye pattern, presumably around the original tick bite. When treated early with antibiotics, most people recover fully.

But untreated early, the disease can be complex and difficult, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: "After several months, approximately 60 percent of patients with untreated infection will begin to have intermittent bouts of arthritis, with severe joint pain and swelling. ... In addition, up to 5 percent of untreated patients may develop chronic neurological complaints months to years after infection." This can include problems with concentration and memory.

One of the obstacles to early treatment is the lack of a reliable diagnostic test for Lyme disease.

U.S. Rep. Frank Wolf (R-10th), chairman of the bipartisan House Lyme Disease Caucus, announced an increase in the CDC's budget for Lyme disease by more than \$3.6 million to \$8.9 million. In particular the funding will encourage the CDC and NIH to develop more accurate diagnostic tests for Lyme, as well as more research, record keeping and education.

The seriousness of the problem locally was evidenced when more than 300 people turned out for an informational meeting on Lyme disease Wolf held last year.

For more, see [www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/Lyme](http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/Lyme).