



STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
DIVISION OF PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES

Nicholas A. Toumpas  
Commissioner

José Thier Montero  
Director

29 HAZEN DRIVE, CONCORD, NH 03301-6504  
603-271-4496 1-800-852-3345 Ext. 4496  
Fax: 603-271-0545 TDD Access: 1-800-735-2964

**Tick bites and single-dose doxycycline as prophylactic treatment for Lyme disease in NH**  
(Based on the 2006 Infectious Disease Society of America guidelines)

A full course of antimicrobial treatment, as used in the treatment of active Lyme disease (i.e., 10-14 days), is NOT recommended for prevention of Lyme disease after a recognized tick bite in the absence of clinical symptoms. A single dose of doxycycline (200 mg) may be offered to adult patients and to children  $\geq 8$  years of age (4 mg/kg up to a maximum dose of 200 mg) when ALL of the following conditions exist.

1. **The attached tick is a black-legged tick (deer tick, *Ixodes scapularis*).** Tick identification is most accurately performed by an individual trained in this discipline. However, black-legged ticks are very common in southeastern and central New Hampshire and there are many images available online to help in general identification.
2. **The tick has been attached for at least 36 hours.** This determination is most reliably made by an entomologist, but simply asking the patient about outdoor activity in the time before the tick bite was noticed can often lead to an accurate estimate of attachment time. Unengorged (unfed) black-legged ticks are typically flat. Any deviation from this "flatness," which is often accompanied by a change in color from brick red to a gray or brown, is an indication that the tick has been feeding.
3. **Prophylaxis can be started within 72 hours of the time that the tick was removed.** This time limit is suggested because of an absence of data on the efficacy of prophylaxis for tick bites following longer time intervals after tick removal.
4. **Doxycycline treatment is not contraindicated.** Doxycycline is contraindicated in pregnant women and children less than 8 years old. The other common antibiotic treatment for Lyme disease, amoxicillin, should NOT be used for prophylaxis because of an absence of data on an effective short-course regimen for prophylaxis and the likely need for a multiday regimen and its associated adverse effects.

Note that single-dose doxycycline is not 100% effective for prevention of Lyme disease; consequently, patients who receive this therapy should monitor themselves for the development of Lyme disease as well as other tick-borne diseases including anaplasmosis and babesiosis.