

SEEKING TREATMENT

RESOURCES FOR FINDING EFFECTIVE HEALTHCARE

Tick-borne disease can affect a patient in many different ways. Is it only Lyme disease, or are there other infections? Where in the body are the pathogens? Are there other pre-existing conditions? Is the patient very old or very young? Is this a recent or lingering infection? These and other concerns make a difference in choosing a healthcare provider who can meet the patient's particular diagnostic and treatment needs. More complex disease might need the expertise of an infectious disease doctor, neurologist, psychologist, rheumatologist, pain or sleep specialist, or specialist in only tick-borne disease.

Note: due to the complicated nature of tick-borne infections, some providers do not take insurance, to allow them more independence in delivering care. Always check the physician's license, qualifications, methodology, and whether insurance will cover care. *The resources listed below do not indicate endorsement of any provider or group.*

To find healthcare providers near you, contact:

Castle Connolly's Top Doctor listings: <http://www.castleconnolly.com/>

International Lyme and Associated Diseases Society's Doctor Search page:
http://ilads.org/ilads_media/physician-referral/

Lyme Disease Association's Doctor Referral Service:
<https://www.lymediseaseassociation.org/doctors>

To find financial assistance resources, try:

General government programs, Massachusetts:
<https://www.benefits.gov/benefits/browse-by-state/state/162>

LymeDisease.org's financial assistance page:
<https://www.lymedisease.org/financial-assistance/>

Rx Assist, for prescription assistance programs: <http://www.rxassist.org/patients>

A word about integrative care: many patients find some relief from their symptoms by integrating over-the-counter care, which may include diet, vitamins, supplements, herbal therapies, acupuncture, massage, yoga, hyperbaric oxygen, or other types of treatment into their medical care. Be cautioned that a treatment that does not need a prescription is not necessarily effective or even safe. Many such treatments have few scientific studies to prove efficacy, although some integrative doctors may have seen them work for thousands of patients. If you are interested in using integrative care, review all forms of care with your healthcare provider.

To research information about complementary and integrative care and licensing, see <https://nccih.nih.gov/health/decisions/credentialing.htm>

For additional questions about particular types of care or safety, search at:

<https://medlineplus.gov/>

<https://nccih.nih.gov/>

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed>

or ask for assistance from a medical or public librarian.

Treatment Guidelines: Included on the following pages are copies of two tick-borne disease treatment guidelines currently in use by physicians in the United States. They agree in some places but disagree in many, particularly when it comes to treating complex or long-term disease. This disagreement (to treat for a prescribed number of days or to treat until symptoms subside) is at the heart of what the media has called the “Lyme wars.” Be sure to discuss your treatment options with your healthcare provider.