

## Could race affect the diagnosis and treatment of Lyme disease?

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Using data from Geisinger electronic medical records, researchers identified 9657 Lyme disease cases diagnosed between 2006 and 2014 in central and northeastern Pennsylvania.

Only 1.4% of Lyme disease patients in central and northeastern Pennsylvania are African-American, according to a medical records review.

Moon and colleagues found that more than 97% of the Lyme disease patients were white non-Hispanic. Only 0.9% were Hispanic and 1.4% were black non-Hispanic.

The authors suggest that "The low-density semi-rural and suburban communities close to wooded, brushy, or grassy landscapes favored by ticks are more likely to be white and affluent," and therefore put this population at a greater risk.

However, different socioeconomic levels, involvement in outdoor leisure activities, access to health care, and awareness of Lyme disease may also play a role. "There is some evidence," the authors write, "that African-Americans may be at higher risk than whites for delayed diagnosis and treatment of Lyme disease," writes Moon, citing a study by Fix. [2]

### Related Articles:

[Lyme disease diagnosis almost missed in patient with Babesia](#)

[Lyme disease in children rising in Pennsylvania: An inside look](#)

### References:

1. Moon KA, Pollak J, Hirsch AG, et al. Epidemiology of Lyme disease in Pennsylvania 2006-2014 using electronic health records. *Ticks Tick Borne Dis.* 2018.
2. Fix AD, Pena CA, Strickland GT. Racial differences in reported Lyme disease incidence. *Am J Epidemiol.* 2000;152(8):756-759.

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