

Drive-thru pharmacy for Lyme disease treatment with doxycycline?

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<https://danielcameronmd.com/lyme-disease-treatment-doxycycline/>

The clinic's program to offer Lyme disease treatment and its effectiveness are described in a recent article by Portman, "[Implementing a pharmacist-run Lyme disease postexposure prophylaxis clinic augmented by academic detailing within the Veterans Health Administration.](#)"¹

In April 2018, VA Butler Healthcare in Pennsylvania opened a pharmacist-run Lyme disease PEP clinic, known as PharmLD clinic. At the center, clinical pharmacy specialists were allowed to prescribe doxycycline for PEP purposes.

According to the retrospective review, 40 patients were referred to the PharmLD clinic. Their visit was augmented by academic detailing. The academic detailing took about 27 minutes per patient.

- 18 individuals (45%) were prescribed a single 200 mg dose as a postexposure prophylaxis for a tick bite;
- 12 individuals (30%) received only education;
- 10 patients (25%) were referred to their primary care physician for further evaluation.

The pharmacist-run clinic was able to cut down the number of doctor visits, but it was not able to determine treatment outcomes for their patients.

ILADS position on single 200 mg dose of doxycycline dose for a tick bite

[The ILADS guidelines concluded that a single 200 mg dose](#) might prevent an erythema migrans rash. The ILADS guidelines could not find evidence that a single 200 mg dose of doxycycline could prevent other manifestations of Lyme disease including Lyme carditis, Lyme arthritis, and neurologic Lyme disease. In addition, the ILADS guidelines raised a concern that a single 200 mg dose of doxycycline might prevent the development of a positive blood test.

The ILADS guideline authors recommended shared medical decision-making when treating patients with a tick bite. "The preferred regimen is 100 – 200 mg of doxycycline, twice daily for 20 days," wrote the authors. They added, "Some patients will value avoiding unnecessary antibiotics and prefer to not treat a tick bite prophylactically. Hence, treatment risks, benefits, and options should be discussed with the patient in the context of shared medical decision-making."²

Editor's note: I am one of the authors of the ILADS guidelines and an advocate for shared medical decision-making. I do not find the research supports the single dose of doxycycline treatment.

Related Articles:

[Time for shared decision-making when treating Lyme disease?](#)

[Single dose of prophylactic treatment of a tick bite only prevents a Lyme rash](#)

[Single dose of doxycycline for Lyme disease leads to poor outcome for 61-year-old man](#)

References:

1. Portman DB. Implementing a pharmacist-run Lyme disease postexposure prophylaxis clinic augmented by academic detailing within the Veterans Health Administration. *J Am Pharm Assoc* (2003). 2020 Feb 12. pii: S1544-3191(20)30006-6.
2. Cameron, DJ, Johnson LB, Maloney EL. Evidence assessments and guideline recommendations in Lyme disease: the clinical management of known tick bites, erythema migrans rashes and persistent disease. *Expert Rev Anti Infect Ther*. 2014 Sep; 12(9): 1103–1135.

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