

# Lyme Disease Symptoms

Symptoms of early Lyme disease may present as a flu-like illness (fever, chills, sweats, muscle aches, fatigue, nausea and joint pain). Some patients have a rash or Bell's palsy (facial drooping). However, although a rash shaped like a bull's-eye is considered characteristic of Lyme disease, many people develop a different kind of Lyme rash or none at all. [Estimates of patients who develop a Lyme rash](#) vary widely, ranging from about 30% to 80%.



For example, a [CDC report](#) on Lyme carditis, which can be fatal, found that only 42% of cases had a rash.

LymeDisease.org has developed a [Lyme disease symptom checklist](#) to help you document your exposure to Lyme disease and common symptoms for your healthcare provider. You will receive a report that you can print out and take with you to your next doctor's appointment.

## CHECK YOUR SYMPTOMS

If Lyme disease is not diagnosed and treated early, it may become late-stage or chronic. This may also occur when early treatment is inadequate. While some symptoms of chronic or late stage Lyme disease are similar to those of early Lyme, as the graphic below shows, there are important differences.

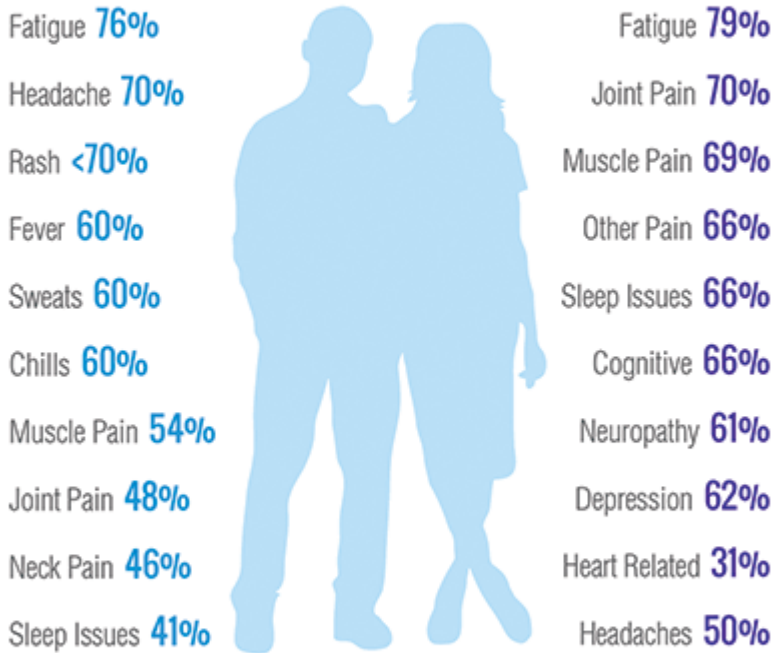
Lyme disease may spread to any part of the body and affect any body system. Typically, it affects more than one body system. In our [survey](#), which drew over 5,000 responses, patients with chronic Lyme disease reported an average of three severe or very severe symptoms, with 74% reporting at least one symptom as severe or very severe.

An [extensive list of symptoms](#) of chronic Lyme disease was

developed by Dr. Joseph Burrascano, a pioneer in treating chronic Lyme disease.

## LYME DISEASE SYMPTOMS

EARLY LYME\* -vs- CHRONIC LYME\*\*



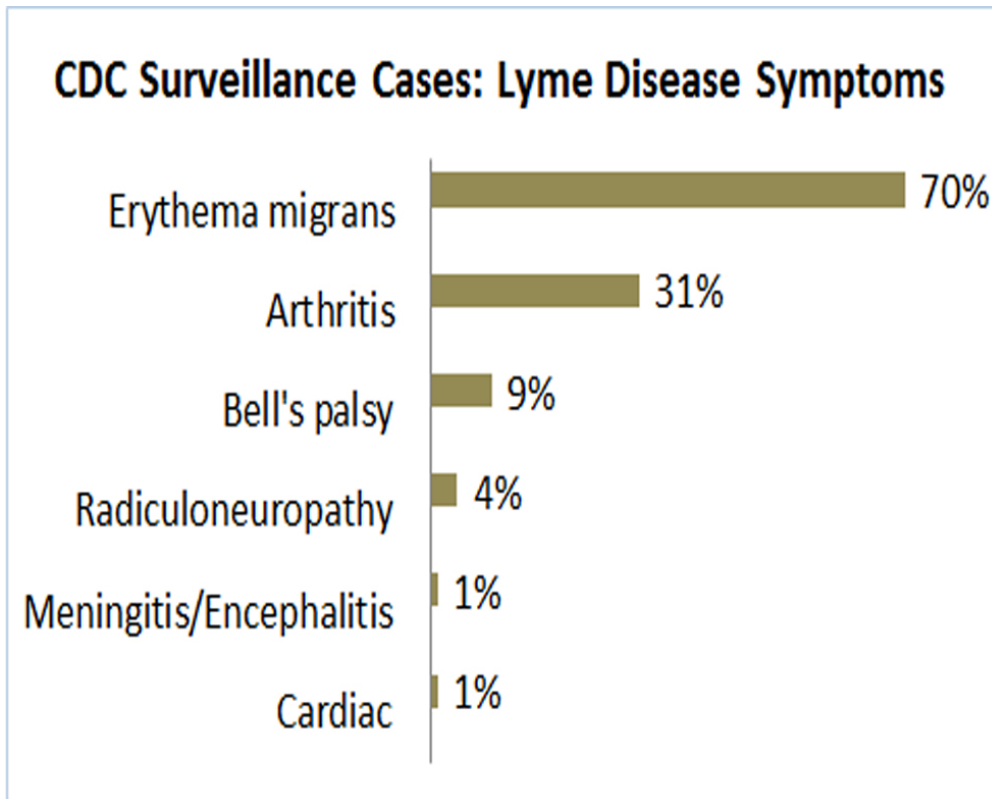
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\*(Aucott 2013)    \*\*(Johnson 2014. Moderate to very severe symptoms)  
Estimates of rash rates range from 25-80% <http://tinyurl.com/kfvu8yt>

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Many Lyme symptoms, such as fatigue, cognitive impairment, joint pain, poor sleep, mood problems, muscle pain, and neurological presentations also occur in other diseases. Hence, the symptoms of Lyme disease significantly overlap those of chronic fatigue, fibromyalgia, rheumatoid arthritis, multiple sclerosis, Parkinson's disease, ALS, depression and Alzheimer's disease. Many Lyme patients report being misdiagnosed with a different condition before being properly diagnosed with Lyme disease.

In order for the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) to recognize a Lyme case for surveillance purposes, there must be "objective" findings, such as positive blood tests, Bell's

palsy or joint swelling (even though Lyme blood tests are unreliable and the CDC's accepted "objective" indicators are not common). The chart below reflects the [CDC-reviewed surveillance case manifestations](#) from 2001 to 2010.



This situation contributes to what many experts view as severe undercounting of Lyme disease by the CDC.