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Last Updated: 05/23/2023



Lyme Disease Awareness Week, 1988

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Lyme disease affects a growing number of Americans each year. It has been identified in more than 30 States and has afflicted thousands of people since its first recognition in 1975.

At first a mystery, the cause of Lyme disease was discovered in 1982 by a scientist at the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases. It is now known that the bite of the tiny deer tick transmits the disease to humans by transferring the causative bacterium to the bloodstream. These ticks are found primarily in wooded areas of the northeastern and midwestern States, but they may also be carried on domestic animals, such as cats and dogs.

Early symptoms of the disease often include a slowly expanding red rash, fatigue, mild headache, pain and stiffness in muscles and joints, a slight fever, or swollen glands. The disease can be easily treated in its early stages with antibiotics, but if the initial symptoms go unnoticed or untreated, more serious manifestations can develop later, including complications affecting the heart, nervous system, and joints.

The best treatment for Lyme disease is prevention. People must know the dangers associated with ticks and take necessary precautions when hiking. They should check regularly for the presence of ticks, know how to remove them, and be alert for the symptoms of Lyme disease.

The National Institutes of Health conducts and supports research to help find better ways to prevent and treat Lyme disease and other tick-borne illnesses. We can be grateful for these and all efforts in the fight against these afflictions.

The Congress, by House Joint Resolution 569, has designated the week of July 24 through July 30, 1988, as "Lyme Disease Awareness Week" and authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation in observance of this week.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim the week of July 24 through July 30, 1988, as Lyme Disease Awareness Week. I call upon all government agencies, health organizations, communications media, and the people of the United States to observe this week with appropriate programs and activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-second day of July, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-eight, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirteenth.

Ronald Reagan