Your Guide To Immediate Tick Bite Response Transcript

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Introduction to Tick Bite Response

This is Dr. Talks. Real talk from real doctors on the issues that matter to you most. Welcome back to Lime Bytes. Rebuilding immunity, reversing inflammation, and redefining recovery.

Today, we're diving into one of the most critical and time-sensitive topics in tick-borne illnesses. What to do if you get a tick bite. The decisions that you make in the first minutes and hours after a bite can profoundly influence whether or not you develop a serious chronic infection.

In this solo episode, I'll walk you through the exact steps to take from how to safely remove the tick, to how to care for the bite site, and most importantly, how to begin early interventions that support your immune system and reduce the risk of Lyme and other vector-borne diseases from taking hold.

I'll also be sharing the herbal and naturopathic protocols I recommend in my clinical practice to help patients act fast and recover fully. Whether you live in a high-risk area, treat patients with tick-borne illnesses, or just want to be prepared, this episode is essential for listening.

This is Lime Bytes. Let the true healing begin. Hi everyone, Dr. Hinchey here. And right now I'm going to go over with you what you should do if you get bit by a tick.

Safe Tick Removal and Wound Care

So in summary, it's important to promptly and properly remove and identify the tick, clean and apply first aid care to the wound, send your tick out to be tested, and then begin an herbal treatment protocol to help to stop the spread of the infection.

vigilantly watch for symptoms, get tested, maybe, and the importance of using an integrative approach. So diving right in, number one, it is so important to make sure that you remove the tick properly.

So we want to use flat tipped tweezers. We want to firmly grasp the tick at the base of its head as close to your skin as possible. And then we want to gently pull with a steady force straight up until it releases itself.

It is super important not to agitate the tick or do anything to get it to regurgitate its contents into the body, because that can actually increase your risk of transmission.

So we do not want to cover it with Vaseline or nail polish or try burning it or anything like that. We want to just pull. directly apart, you'll see a little bit of tenting with the skin and start counting.

Usually the tick will release itself around 90 seconds. You want to make sure that you do not grab the tick by its body. If you do this, you will probably rip it in half.

And if you leave the mouth parts or the head inside of the body, you will increase your risk, not only of getting whatever infectious organisms that the tick contains, like tick-borne diseases, But also the presence of the head or the mouth pieces left in the body can cause infection all by itself.

So once the tick is removed, we want to clean the area. I like to use just soap and water. And then I like to put hydrogen peroxide on top because it is the best disinfectant.

Then I will typically mix a little bit of bentonite clay powder with an herb called andographis. So andographis is directly anti-spirochete. And if you mix it together and make kind of like a poultice, when the clay dries, it has this drawing action that actually helps to pull the saliva out of your body.

Then I will soak a cotton ball in Andrographis itself, and I will apply that cotton ball to the wound for the next 24 hours, hoping to get some transdermal application of that Andrographis because again, it is anti-spirochetyl.

We can use homeopathic remedies like Apis and Lidum because they are good at systemically helping the body's reaction to an insect bite of any kind. So then it's important to put the tick into a Ziploc bag.

You don't need to kill the tick or do anything to it. Just put it in the bag, Ziploc it so it can't escape. And then you're going to go to tickreport.com.

Now there are many different reporting agencies and testing agencies that you can send your tick out to. This just happens to be my favorite. This is the company that I use with my family as well as with my patients.

Testing the Tick and Starting Herbal Support

They have amazing customer service. They have a great turnaround time. And they have found certain pathogens in ticks when other companies have failed to do so.

So real quick side note, I had a patient who was bit by a tick. She sent it out. The tick came back clean. She was told it did not have any pathogens.

And she went on to develop a rash about three weeks later and was symptomatic of Lyme disease. And she ended up contracting Lyme. Very long story short, we ended up getting that tick back and sent it to tickreport.com and tickreport.com did identify the tick as having Borrelia.

So we'll get into this later on, but if you develop an EM rash, you definitely have Lyme disease. It doesn't matter what any test says. So go to tickreport.com, place your order.

I recommend that you do the full tick pathogen panel. It's about 200 bucks. You're going to write your registration number on the Ziploc bag as well as on the outside of the envelope.

And I highly recommend that you overnight it via FedEx to tickreport.com so that you can get your results back within the 72 hour window. Um, that is effective in treating and preventing Lyme disease, as well as this is when they guarantee to get you your results back.

So the turnaround time's about 48 to 72 hours. Okay. Then I think it's important to begin herbal treatment protocols. So if we don't know what the tick is carrying, And we don't know what pathogens you've gotten from the tick.

I don't feel like it's wise to use prescription antibiotics, especially when I feel there are safer options. There was a study that showed that one dose of doxy at the time of tick bite prevented Lyme disease.

This study is flawed for so many reasons and I cannot emphasize enough that that just simply is not true. One dose of any antibiotic at the time of a bite does not prevent anything.

End of story. So what can we do? We can start an herbal protocol that helps to decrease the spread of the infection and helps to support the immune system while we are waiting to get those tick results back so that we know what pathogens the tick had and therefore what pathogens we could have contracted from that tick.

So there are various herbs that I'm going to go over that help to inhibit the inflammatory cytokine cascade and support the immune system as well as offer antimicrobial, so antibacterial, antiviral, and antiparasitic properties.

And then also once you get your tick back, then you and your Lyme literate physician can decide if it is wise to add in a pharmaceutical antibiotic or anti-parasitic into the mix.

So these are two formulas that I use often with tick bites and I combine them together but I want to go over them separately. So ASAB stands for as soon as bit.

And it's an herbal formula that intervenes at every step of the infectious process. So it helps to inhibit transmission in the acute phase but it also helps to balance the immune system, inhibit the inflammatory cytokines, as well as shut down the enzymes that help to break down our collagen and extracellular matrix and help the infection move throughout the body.

And it also helps to protect the endothelial cells, which are the types of cells that both Borrelia and Bartonella like to infect. So ASAB does all of that.

And then ASAB2 is an antimicrobial herbal formula that is intended to be used as soon as you find the tick bite. And it has a broad spectrum of antimicrobials.

Herbal Treatment Goals for Tick-Borne Illness

So whether that tick has a virus, a bacteria, or a parasite, the herbal array that's in there covers all of those various types of microorganisms. OK.

So the five goals for herbal treatment of tick-borne disease, and this happens to be in chronic as well as the acute case, we want to reduce inflammation.

So we want to inhibit that inflammatory cytokine cascade. We want to balance the immune system. We want to inhibit the destruction of the extracellular matrix and collagen and endothelial cells, because this is how the organisms move throughout the body and actually feed off of our tissues to live.

And then of course, we want to kill the infectious organisms and opportunistic infections that might arise because of the presence of these new pathogens.

And then of course, we want to make sure that we are supporting detoxification and that all routes of elimination are working properly. When we are not appropriately detoxing and eliminating, our Herxheimer reactions are much more severe and frequent.

So these next several slides have a lot of information on them and I'm going to hit the highlights for you. I also will make sure that you have a downloadable PDF of these slides because there's a lot of information here.

So this slide is going to go over the herbal treatment goals for tick-borne diseases. And the first is reducing inflammation. So on here, we have all of the inflammatory cytokines, as well as the various herbs that are going to inhibit each one of them.

And what you will notice here is that all of these inflammatory cytokines are going to be inhibited by using a combination of Chinese skullcap, Japanese knotweed and cordyceps.

Okay. So there's a lot of other herbs, like I said on here that are going to help as well. But basically if you put those three together, Chinese skull cap, Japanese knotweed and cordyceps, you will inhibit every single one of these inflammatory cytokines.

Okay. Second goal, we want to balance the immune system. So balancing the immune system and restoring proper immune function is crucial for overcoming Lyme and other tick-borne diseases.

So my hands down, my absolute favorite is ashwagandha because it counteracts the exact modulation of the immune system that both the tick saliva as well as Borrelia initiate to maintain and keep the infection going.

There's a lot of other adaptogenic herbs that I talk about that helps to modulate the immune response and balance Th1 and Th2 immune pathways. So check those out.

Our third treatment goal is to inhibit the destruction of the extracellular matrix collagen and the endothelial cells. And so we can do this again, using a combination of Japanese knotweed ashwagandha and Chinese skull caps.

So I love it when we hear these same herbs over and over and over again, having these multiple synergistic benefits. Something that's really important to know is the MMPs or the collagenases.

So these are the enzymes that break down collagen. We can inhibit those using a combination of Japanese knotweed and Chinese skullcap. Our fourth treatment goal is obviously to kill the infectious organisms.

And so my favorite herbs for doing this are Japanese knotweed and Chinese skullcap. We just talked about these two herbs and you saw the array of other effects that they had.

Well, guess what? They also are antimicrobial, so they have some killing effects. And I just love it when these herbs have a synergistic effect where we have side benefits instead of side effects.

Cryptolapus is another one of my favorite herbs as a killer. It not only is antibacterial, but it is anti-parasitic. So it's effective against a multitude of organisms.

And Cryptolapus also has been studied and shown to be effective against the persister cells.

Recognizing Lyme Symptoms and the EM Rash

And we really can't say that about any of the antibiotics that are out there. Okay, so here is a study that was done by Feng, and it was an evaluation of natural and botanical medicines for activity against the growing and non-growing forms of Borrelia burgdorferi.

So this study provides the first convincing evidence that some of the herbs used by patients such as cryptolepis, black walnut, sweet wormwood, cat's claw, and Japanese knotweed have potent activity against the Lyme disease bacteria, especially the dormant persister forms, which are not killed by current Lyme antibiotics.

So this is a great study to reference. Okay. And our fifth treatment goal is supporting effective detoxification and elimination. So we have to ensure proper detoxification, not only at the cellular and organ level, but we have to support its exit out of the body.

So we have to make sure that elimination is working properly as well. So we have several herbal compounds that protect cells from oxidative stress and optimize cellular health and contribute to tissue detoxification.

But we also need to make sure that we are maintaining the intestinal barriers integrity so that we can actually get toxins out of the body and they're not being recirculated into the systemic circulation.

It is helpful to use binders. I love chlorella. And I love Galactin 3 modulator or G3 because not only do they bind these toxins, but they also work in other ways to decrease the severity of a herx and eliminate toxins from the body.

And I'll get into that in a much deeper talk later on in the summit. Okay, so it's so important to watch for symptoms. There are so many symptoms of Lyme and Babesia and Bartonella and Anaplasma.

These organisms infect every single cell in the body, so they're going to affect the functioning of every cell in the body. And presentation can look differently in different people depending on our genetic and structural weaknesses.

But I will say, usually in the beginning, It is typically flu like symptoms. We can have stiff neck, we can have headaches, we can have sensitivity to our environment.

So to light, to sound, obviously we can have the typical joint swelling, muscle pain, but we also can see mood changes. And a lot of times these can be very abrupt.

We can have heart issues like palpitations or tachycardia, which is racing hearts. We can have neurological symptoms like numbness, tingling, memory issues, sleep disturbances, so many different symptoms.

And again, they can vary from person to person and where you are. in the infectious process. But I would say the biggest thing to look out for is a general flu-like presentation.

And this can happen several days to several weeks after the initial bite. Now, obviously we can see that rash or that erythema migraines rash, but I want to make it very clear that that rash is only there with Borrelia.

So only with Lyme, not with any of the co-infections. And it is there in less than 20 to 40% of patients who develop Lyme disease.

Why Lyme Testing Can Miss Cases

So we absolutely cannot rely on this rash for diagnostic criteria. Now, if the rash is there, that is diagnostic of Lyme disease, no matter what any test says.

Now here is the better look at that rash. So this is the classic rash, the bullseye. They do not all look like this. In fact, most of them do not look like this.

Again, its presentation varies from 27% to 47%, which means it is there less often than it is there. The rash can appear anywhere from 3 to 30 days after the bite and it is not always symmetrical and it can be misdiagnosed as a multitude of other skin issues.

So again, I want to point out the lack of an EM rash does not mean you do not have Lyme. But the presence of an EM rash means you 100% have Lyme despite what any test tells you.

Okay. So get tested, maybe. Why do I say maybe? Well, because there are three main reasons. Number one, the test that is really readily available even with a specialty lab is looking at what is called an indirect test.

So it's looking at the body's production of antibodies to the organism. So we are detecting the organism through the presence of antibodies, not direct, as in we found the organism.

And so the problem is that it takes three weeks for antibodies called IgM's to really hit the level that they're going to be testable. And it takes about four to six weeks for antibodies called IgGs to be produced to the level that would get you a positive test.

And so you're going to miss so many cases of Lyme disease when the patient is tested within the first one to two weeks after being bit, which is when most doctors order their tests.

So that's number one. Number two is that if you go to a conventional laboratory, they are only testing for Borrelia burgdorferi sensu strict 2. This is going to give you a false negative more than 30% of the time.

Why? Because there are 18 other species of Lyme disease or of Borrelia that cause Lyme disease that we are not testing for. So that's like me telling you reach into this box that has 20 crayons and they're all different colors and you pull out a green crayon and I say i'm going to test you for a crayon using a test that only picks up a red crayon and i'm going to tell you that you don't have a crayon.

And you're going to tell me that I'm crazy because you're clearly holding a crayon, but it's green. My test only picks up a red crayon. You see, so it's like they're only looking at one species of lime when there are all of these other species of lime that need to be tested for as well.

Okay. And now the third reason is a little bit more complicated, but when you are looking at with a conventional lab, either a Western blot or an immunoblot, they look at 10 IgGs and three IgMs.

And really we should be looking at 14 IgGs and 14 IgM's roughly. So there are other companies that go much, much deeper into all of the proteins that should be evaluated, not just the 13 that these conventional labs do.

Okay. So I hope that this was helpful and I hope that you now know what to do when you get that. Take care, I'll see you soon. Thank you for tuning into Doctor Talks.

We hope today's episode has enlightened and inspired you on your path to optimal health. Each day is a new opportunity to make choices that empower your wellbeing.

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Real Talks from Real Doctors, on the issues that matter to you most.