

Hello all,

I hope everyone is doing well! This is a long newsletter, with several attachments. In the newsletter, we will state upcoming (virtual) meeting dates for the month of May, talk about general lyme/tick prevention tips and other information, and briefly cover what is in the attachments.

May (virtual) meeting schedule via Zoom. (Further instructions on using Zoom attached to this email.) **Meeting ID: 651 467 5110** **Password: 535214**

~ **Tuesday, May 12 from 1-2:30pm**, no agenda, socializing only.

~ **Saturday, May 23 from 2-3:30pm**, Topic: Preventing Lyme. This interactive discussion will focus on everyone sharing their best lyme prevention methods and tips. A brief power point presentation will also be shared.

If you'd like to attend one of the virtual meetings, my suggestion is to put it on your calendar NOW, along with a reminder for about 10 minutes before the meeting itself starts; this way you don't have to rely on your memory to attend the meetings.

General Information

We are well into the month of May, which is also Lyme Disease Awareness month. While the COVID-19 pandemic is receiving the majority of the world's attention just now, please do not forget to protect yourselves and loved ones from the pandemic of lyme disease.

Continue to wear the bug preventive of your choice *at all times*, *do a comprehensive tick check* at least once a day, and *know what steps to take if you are bitten by a tick*. I've copied and pasted below the steps one support group member took when she was recently bitten by a tick in her own (non-wooded), small backyard. (Thanks so much for sharing your advice with the group, Kristin! This is excellent!)

"Following up with what I plan to do about this tick bite in case anyone is interested... knowledge is power and many have already contacted me for advice about tick bites this month.

1. Immediately removed the tick and placed in a sealed plastic sandwich bag with a cotton ball. (See my prior post about how to properly remove a tick). We had a hard time removing this one tonight and it was not ideal. Be patient and ensure you remove the entire tick including its head.

2. Wash the tick bite with warm soap and water. Apply Neosporin.

3. Tomorrow I will apply oregano and tea tree oil once I have it available.

4. Contact my doctor for advice and antibiotics.

5. Send the tick away for testing. You can use:

<https://www.tickreport.com/> Or

<https://igenex.com/tick-test/>

I'm still debating and will pick a site tomorrow. I have used tickreport and tickology before.

6. Observe the tick bite and yourself for any signs and symptoms.

I will also add that Kristin used a pair of sharp-nosed tweezers to remove the tick by grasping it as closely to the attached mouth-piece of the tick as possible, and pulling straight up and away until it released. (Please do not EVER cover the tick with anything to make it release more quickly, as this often causes the tick to regurgitate, dumping its pathogen load into the bloodstream.) Thankfully, Kristin was able to report that the tick that bit her was negative for all diseases after having it tested. However, this highlights the need to stay vigilant about using bug spray, doing tick checks, and being knowledgeable about the proper ways to remove ticks.

In a previous newsletter, I had mentioned that the Lyme Disease March for 2020 would take place on September 13 & 14th of this year. The organizers of this event have decided that due to the coronavirus (and the fact that the majority of people with chronic lyme are immunocompromised), this event will be held online. The organizers ask that you stay tuned to their website (www.greenenvelopeproject.org) for further details as they are made. I will also continue to update you on this event.

In a "normal" year, Lyme Alive would already have had several major information booths at a variety of events both locally and in collaboration with the Lyme Education Awareness Foundation (LEAF). We would already have helped educate many people on tips for preventing lyme disease, symptoms to watch out for, treatment options, and why the testing is so unreliable; chances are we would also have met people suffering from chronic lyme in need of our group's support. We would also (likely) have given out 100+ free kids' lyme prevention bags at various events, at parks, etc. Instead, myself and many other support group leaders and activists are working together to figure out how to best reach and educate the public about the need to protect themselves from ticks and other biting insects, either online or while practicing safe social distancing measures. To this end, many are holding online group discussions via Zoom, even speaking to various churches and other groups this way. If your group is in need of a guest speaker on the topic of lyme, please let me know so that proper connections can be made.

About the email attachments

1. The first attachment to this email is entitled "Zoom tips for Lyme Alive members". If you are familiar with Zoom, you are likely already more knowledgeable about it than I am, and have no need to download this. If, however, you are less familiar with Zoom and plan to attend our virtual meetings, you might find the information helpful.
2. The second attachment is entitled "Toxins", and is one of the handouts from our most recent in-person meeting back in February. In it, you will find a simplified list of some toxic chemicals found in common, everyday items, and the impact they can potentially have on your health. I also share some basic recipes for making your own, less toxic, alternatives, should you decide to do so.
3. The third attachment is called "detox ideas", and many group members have already seen this. It is recently updated to include a couple of new ideas shared at our last meeting, however. If you have any detox ideas you would like to see added to our group's list, please either reply to this email with them, or plan to share at one of our Zoom meetings.

Recap

- We will have two (2) meetings in May, via Zoom. Tuesday the 12th from 1-2:30 & Saturday 23rd from 2-3:30.
- It is important to wear bug preventive and do a tick check DAILY. Know the proper way to remove a tick, and steps to take afterward.
- Continue to reach out to one another, myself, and friends/family for support during this difficult time.

As always, please know that we are all in this fight against chronic lyme disease and other co-infections together. Do not hesitate to reach out for support, at any time. Take care, and be kind to yourselves!

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