

Lyme Disease 'App' For iPhone Developed by Yale School of Public Health

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(PhysOrg.com) -- The popular iPhone now offers a Lyme disease 'app' that allows users to better protect themselves against the most prevalent insect-borne disease in the United States.

Faculty and students at the Yale School of Public Health combined research data with creativity to create the new application. It includes information on the abundance of infected ticks at the location of the user (within the United States) as determined by GPS. If ticks are determined to be present, the user is given a list of precautions to avoid tick-bites. A tick identification chart is also provided with life-size photos of black-legged ticks (also known as deer ticks) so that each life stage can be determined, since some stages cannot transmit [Lyme disease](#). If the user

has been bitten, instructions on how to properly remove a tick are provided along with a narrated video.

The application also provides life-size photos of ticks at various stages of blood engorgement and advises patients to seek medical attention if it is determined that a removed tick had been attached for 48 hours or longer. Lyme disease can be transmitted after 48 hours of feeding by an infected tick and most physicians will treat such patients with a short course of antibiotics to prevent Lyme disease. A panel of skin rash photos characteristic of Lyme disease, along with other symptoms, prompts users to seek immediate medical attention if they are infected. A physician locator finds doctors nearest to the user, again using GPS, and provides the phone number and directions to each physician's office.

“This is the first health application for smartphones that could have an immediate impact on a major disease” said Durland Fish, a Yale professor of epidemiology who oversaw the development of the application. Users of the app should be able to avoid being bitten if they know that ticks are around, and if they are bitten, they can tell if it is the right kind and right stage that can cause Lyme disease. They will know when to seek medical advice so that the disease can either be prevented or treated in its very early stages. “You can only get Lyme disease in certain areas, only by certain ticks, and only after a tick has remained attached for a certain amount of time” said Fish. “Information provided by this app should help many people prevent Lyme disease.”

Content for the application is provided by Lyme disease researchers at Yale in cooperation with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control, the American Lyme Disease Foundation, and Intuwinn, an applications development company in New York City. It is available through the Apple iTunes Store for \$1.99. Proceeds will support the research and education mission of the American Lyme Disease Foundation based in Lyme, Conn.

Provided by Yale University

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