

LymeMD News

LYME DISEASE RESEARCH

FOUNDATION OF MARYLAND



Lyme Disease cases rise as nationwide funding declines
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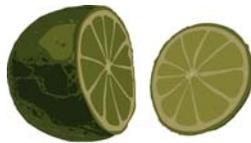
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A SLICE OF LIFE: STUDY OF LYME DISEASE IMMUNOLOGY AND CLINICAL EVENTS

SLICE is a landmark study sponsored by LymeMD. A collaborative initiative with the Division of Rheumatology at Johns Hopkins, the study examines the impact of Lyme disease on the human immune system and on patient health. We believe that understanding how the immune system responds in Lyme disease is the key to understanding why between 10 and 20 percent of treated patients experience persistent symptoms *even after* antibiotic treatment of their Lyme disease. We must understand the causes of chronic illness associ-



SLICE Study logo

ated with Lyme disease *before* we can formulate effective treatments for suffering patients.

The *SLICE* study examines - for the first time - the patterns of immune response in patients who develop the disabling chronic symptoms of fatigue and pain *after* treatment of their Lyme disease. Each of us has an immune response designed to control infection. But sometimes this response creates damage and actually perpetuates symptoms. With Lyme disease, the patient's immune system's 'good' response fights the infection, but there can also be a 'bad' response (autoimmunity) to the invading bacteria of Lyme disease.

The goal of our *SLICE* study is to examine both the good and bad responses of the immune system in patients before and after their initial antibiotic treatment. In addition, we will examine risk factors, severity of symptoms, cognitive dysfunction, and associated biomarkers (blood tests that may show a correlation with disease activity or prognosis) in patients who develop different patterns of immune response.

For the study, we are recruiting 100 patients with acute, untreated Lyme disease who will be treated and followed for two years. Their symptoms and cognitive function will be

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THE LYME MD WEBSITE— WWW.LYMEDM.ORG

In the fall of 2007, LymeMD launched its website. The site was created in order to publicize the goals of the Foundation, educate the public, provide links to important resources, report on the first ever prospective cohort study of post treatment Lyme Syndrome, and offer a chance for visitors to make a donation.

Facilitating donations, the site uses Google checkout and thus far almost \$7000 has been donated via the site. Initial efforts at using Yahoo to increase site visits proved less than cost efficient, so that effort was dropped. However, even without such an effort, during the month of Sep-

tember, the site had almost 19,000 hits and 1,171 visitors.

Please take a moment and visit www.lymemd.org - learn more about Lyme Disease, access the links, and, most importantly, please help us by making a donation to the Foundation so that we can continue our research and education efforts!





LYME CASES ON THE RISE – FUNDING DECREASES

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has reported that in 2007 alone, new cases of Lyme disease increased 39% over 2006 - to over 27,000 reported cases. Every year, thousands more are at risk for developing Lyme Disease while funding for urgently needed research continues to decline (see graph).

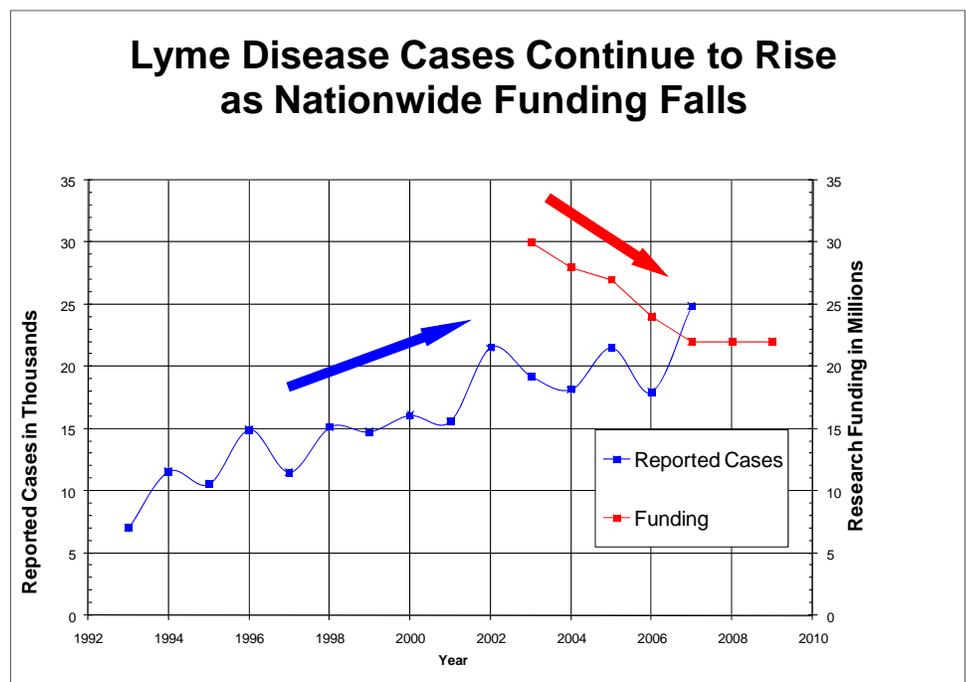
LymeMD has taken the lead in an attempt to reverse these trends:

- Since launching LymeMD in 2007, we have initiated aggressive educational outreach programs to the community and to regional physicians.
- The Lyme Disease Clinical Research Center at Greenspring Station has begun seeing patients for the SLICE study, LymeMD's first major research project.

We have raised more than \$250,000 through individual donations toward our goal of \$1 million needed to fund this critically needed research.

Through research and education, we can halt the epidemic of Lyme disease that threatens our families and communities.

Please join with us in this important project by making your contribution. Contributions can be made directly through our website or by check to LymeMD (mail to address below).



SLICE, CONT'D

(Continued from page 1)

measured with standardized instruments along with surveys completed by the patients to record their symptoms and intelligence tests administered by our staff to measure their cognitive function. Samples of their blood, immune cells, DNA, and RNA will also be collected and stored for future research and analysis.

We predict that our *SLICE* study will provide fundamental insights into the relationship of immune pathways, biomarkers and the

persistence of symptoms in patients with Lyme disease that may be clues to the cause of persistent symptoms or may serve as the basis for future diagnostic tests.

This holds promise for identifying new biomarkers that are essential for developing new diagnostic tests, ways to monitor progress of the disease, and strategies for future treatment. It is an exciting undertaking.

Lyme MD

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Contributions are welcome and can be made directly on the website