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Lifespan Lyme Disease Center

Study Summary: Lyme Patients Report Higher QOL over Time than General Population

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The goal of the researchers in this recent longitudinal analysis was to “describe trends in Lyme disease symptoms, laboratory results, and QOL (quality of life) to better understand the impact of infection over time, and better inform clinical practices for managing Lyme disease patients”. The study was conducted by the NIH between 2001 and 2014. They found that Lyme patients reported higher QOL over time than the general population.

101 patients participated in the study. During the first interview, they filled out a QOL survey, demographic and clinical data were collected, and preexisting comorbidities (obesity, mental or behavioral conditions, etc.) were self-reported and verified by researchers. Over the years, patients had follow up’s where they retook the QOL survey.

In the beginning, the patients scored lower on their QOL surveys than the general population, which is to be expected since they currently had Lyme disease. However, within three years, Lyme patients’ QOL scores exceeded the national average. The patients who originally had comorbidities reported long term Lyme symptoms 13% more often than those without comorbidities. In addition, patients with comorbidities were 24% more likely PER COMORBIDITY to have low QOL scores. The researchers concluded, “Only pre-existing comorbidities, and not Lyme disease stage or severity, were predicative of having lower QOL scores and long-term symptoms”.

Take away message: In the long run, Lyme does not affect your life as much as other health conditions. It is important to live a healthy lifestyle regardless of whether you are struggling with Lyme disease or not. We expect that Lyme patients score above the national average in the long run because having the disease has made them more health-conscious. The healthy decisions they made as a result of their illness benefited them in the long run and probably led to lifelong positive behavior changes. This highlights the importance of overall healthy living. Visit our wellness pages for healthy living advice.

To see the original article

visit: <http://www.healio.com/rheumatology/infection/news/online/%7Bc7e19499-c8cb-4ec2-b1f7-e4e45a4772f6%7D/lyme-patients-report-higher-qol-over-time-than-general-population>

Study Summary: Longer Therapy Shows no Added Benefit for Persistent Lyme Disease Symptoms

The benefit of long term antibiotic therapy on Lyme symptoms has been debated for several years although there have been no conclusive studies showing its efficacy. This randomized, double-blind study was conducted in the Netherlands from October 2010 to June 2013. It enrolled 280 patients with symptomatic Lyme disease and patients with *B. Burgdorferi* antibodies and consistent musculoskeletal pain, arthritis, arthralgia, neuralgia, sensory disturbances, dysesthesia, neuropsychological disorders or cognitive disorders. Efficacy was measured by quality of life (QOL) scores obtained at the beginning, throughout, and at the end of the study.

All participants received 2,000 mg of open-label intravenous ceftriaxone (one of the standard treatments for Lyme) daily for 14 days. After the initial course, 280 participants were randomly assigned in a 1:1:1 ratio to receive a 12-week course of 100 mg doxycycline plus placebo twice daily, 500 mg clarithromycin plus 200 mg hydroxychloroquine twice daily, or two placebo capsules twice daily.

At the end of the study, there was no significant difference in the QOL scores between the groups receiving long term antibiotics and the placebo group. However, almost half of the patients taking long term antibiotics experienced nausea, diarrhea, and light sensitivity.

Take away message: The purpose of long term antibiotic regimens are to prevent microbiological relapse. However, it has not been proven that *B. burgdorferi* can survive the initial antibiotic regiment. Chronic Lyme symptoms are caused by inflammation from previous, not current infection. As a result, subsequent antibiotics are useless, as supported by this study. Antibiotics will not alleviate Lyme symptoms after *B. burgdorferi* are eliminated. In fact, due to the negative side effects associated with antibiotics, long term regimens should be avoided if possible, especially in cases such as Lyme, where there is no apparent benefit.

To see the original article visit: <http://www.healio.com/infectious-disease/emerging-diseases/news/online/%7Ba31ca3f8-07c3-4684-a57f-85a3daad76e9%7D/longer-therapy-shows-no-added-benefit-for-persistent-lyme-disease-symptoms>