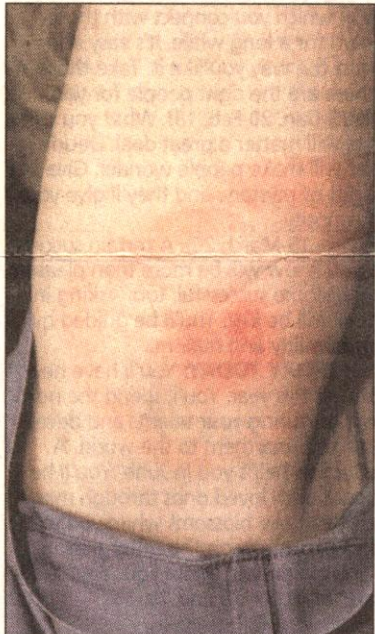


BEWARE OF LYME DISEASE

A few years ago my wife, Anita, and I went backpacking overnight with Logan McCulloch, a friend who does a lot of that sort of thing. He was in incredible shape and could have run a marathon with a heavy backpack. I hadn't heard from Logan for a while, and when I did recently, I was surprised to learn that he has Lyme disease. He told me — "I've gone from weekends spent backpacking to struggling to walk my dog for 20 minutes and needing to collapse on the couch for hours afterward." Wow!

Logan is working with a support group for sufferers here in Louisville and is avidly trying to get the word out that this devastating disease is flourishing in Kentucky and we need to be aware of it. Here are some excerpts from his compelling letter to me.

"The 30+ people I've met in support group meetings are to a person very, very sick. Most have had Lyme for years and were repeatedly misdiagnosed and went untreated. A common



This photograph depicts the pathognomonic erythematous rash in the pattern of a bull's-eye, which manifested at the site of a tick bite. AP PHOTO/CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL

THE BODY SHOP

Bryant Stamford



theme was their doctors did not believe Lyme is present in Kentucky, or they did not consider Lyme as a potential diagnosis. The problem is, it's a difficult diagnosis for several reasons, and because Lyme attacks your immune system, many sufferers are dealing with additional illnesses. The key is prevention, of course,

but if you are infected it's critical to catch the disease early and that's what my efforts are all about."

Delayed symptoms

"I was bitten at a backcountry campsite in Kentucky last Memorial Day weekend. I awoke to find more than 20 deer tick nymphs had bitten me. I thought I had removed them all, but either I missed one, and/or they collectively transferred enough of the spirochete bacteria into me to overwhelm my immune system. My first symptoms began in July, but it was not until September that I first considered it could be Lyme.

"As an avid backpacker I thought I was well informed about Lyme. I was wrong. For example, mainstream media tell us that Lyme is indicated by a bull's-eye rash at the site of the bite. I've learned that rashes appear only 50 percent of the time. What's more, only half of these rashes present as a bull's-eye and not always at the site of the bite. So, please don't depend on the bull's-eye rash surrounding the bite as an indicator.

"I'm trying to get the word out that by this spring, when the tick population naturally explodes, many campsites in Kentucky will be infested. This keeps me up at night worrying about campers being bitten and infected without their knowing. A friend of mine who has suffered from Lyme was bitten on his Shelby County farm. He was aware of what to look for and he suspected Lyme, so he took the ticks to his doctor and showed the classic bull's-eye rash. Regrettably, his doctor refused to believe it was Lyme. Why? Be-



A deer tick's bite can lead to Lyme disease, which attacks your immune system. AP FILE PHOTO



Sean Cobb tends to his wife, Mandy Hughes, as she suffers a seizure in the film, "Under Our Skin." The film by Andy Abrahams Wilson will be presented at 6:30 p.m. May 11 at the Clifton Center.

cause Lyme is not in Kentucky! Another friend is a young mother who was misdiagnosed for several years, a common occurrence, and is struggling mightily to regain her health. These are scary stories and so is the fact that children 10 years of age and under are the fastest-growing segment of those infected with Lyme. I thank God my son was not infected on our father-son camping trip."