

Long Branch, NJ – LDA Spotlight On Lyme© Walk

I welcome you here today on behalf of the Lyme Disease Association for the 4th annual LDA Spotlight on Lyme 5k walk/run and thank you for your participation. As many of you know, Lyme disease is found in 65 countries worldwide and has been reported in all 50 states. New Jersey ranked 4th in the US in 2009 with 4,973 reported cases, meaning there were 49,730 actual new Lyme cases in NJ in 2009. Monmouth County ranked fifth in the State in Lyme case numbers with 409 reported cases in 2009, meaning 4,090 actual cases that year in Monmouth County alone.

The Lyme bacteria can enter the central nervous system in less than 24 hours after a tick bite, and it can cause psychiatric and neurologic manifestations as well as arthritic, cardiac, and eye problems. It may be misdiagnosed as MS, ALS, chronic fatigue, fibromyalgia, lupus, Alzheimer's, even autism. Studies have shown people with Lyme can be as sick as those with congestive heart failure. Unfortunately, children 5-14 are at the greatest risk of acquiring the disease.

The Centers for Disease Control & Prevention, CDC, just announced yesterday that Lyme disease cases tripled from 1992 to 2009. In spite of that statistic and the debilitating nature of Lyme, the federal government expends very little monies on Lyme disease research. Due to huge fiscal problems in general in the US, it is safe to assume funding will not increase in the near future. Thus organizations like the LDA are left to try and fund cutting edge research projects to answer questions about Lyme disease. I am pleased to announce that by the end of 2010, the LDA surpassed \$5 million raised for research over its lifetime. Since LDA is an all volunteer national organization with little overhead and no paid employees, most of those monies have gone directly to education and research projects and patient support.

LDA continues to fund its LymeAid 4 Kid program for children without insurance coverage for Lyme, and it just posted on its website a new prevention video and an interactive video game geared for children, developed in a partnership with UMDNJ. LDA is a partner with the Environmental Protection Agency's PESP program for Lyme prevention, and I co-chaired a section

of FDA's prevention conference in Virginia in March. LDA is busy planning its 12th annual scientific and medical conference for doctors and health care providers with its joint sponsor Columbia University, to be held in Philadelphia October 1 & 2. The public is invited to register. Details will be on the LDA website www.LymeDiseaseAssociation.org soon.

The LDA has been successful in having research it has supported published in scientific peer reviewed publications, meaning that research LDA has supported has been validated by reviewers in the field of Lyme and tick-borne diseases, and it is now available to all researchers. The findings can be used to base new projects on, moving the Lyme disease field forward. In 2010, LDA was acknowledged in 3 new scientific research publications and so far in 2011, one new publication, bringing the total to 22 journal publications to date for LDA research.