

2016 Annual Scientific Conference: New Strategies to Tackle an Expanding Epidemic

The Lyme Disease Association, Inc. with joint provider Columbia University, held its 17th annual scientific CME* conference, *Lyme & Other Tick-Borne Diseases: New Strategies to Tackle an Expanding Epidemic*. Brian Fallon, MD, Columbia University was Conference Director. It was held at the Doubletree by



Hilton St. Paul Downtown, 411 Minnesota Street, St. Paul, Minnesota, 55101, USA on Saturday October 15 and Sunday October 16, 2016.

The conference is designed for physicians and researchers but the public was invited to register. *14.0 AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™* were offered by Columbia University to CME-registered physician attendees. The conference featured twenty faculty consisting of clinicians and researchers from across the US and one from Switzerland.

The conference featured very current research that could alter the field. Saturday's Keynote speaker, Dr. Robert Moir from Harvard presented his breaking in vitro results on Beta Amyloid, Alzheimer's and Lyme Disease. This was followed by a talk by Dr. Judith Miklossy, International Alzheimer Research Center, reviewing evidence suggesting a link between spirochetal infection and Alzheimer's Disease. The newest breakthrough in the combination of novel biotechnologies (proteomics and nanotechnology) for improved Lyme diagnostics has led to the nanotrap; results from an initial study will be presented by Dr. Alessandra Luchini from George Mason University. A new species of *Borrelia* was recently discovered to cause Lyme in the US; this will be discussed by Dr. Bobbi Pritt from the Mayo Clinic. Dr. Ying Zhang from Johns Hopkins discussed new in vitro antimicrobial strategies to eradicate "Borrelia persisters", that offer promise for more effective interventions for human Lyme disease. Dr. John Aucott from Johns Hopkins Medical Center presented new findings regarding the human immune response in Lyme disease.

In the area of prevention, the latest on a novel mouse vaccine was discussed by Dr. Steve Zatechka, *US BIOLOGIC*. Work so new it is generating discussions from scientists around the world on the impact it might have on ecology in general was presented by Dr. Kevin Esvelt, from MIT Sculpting Evolution Lab, his talk addressed Community-Guided Ecological Immunization to Prevent Tick-Borne Disease using CRISPR technology.

Other talks discussed diagnosing neurologic Lyme disease by Dr. Patricia Coyle, Stony Brook; acute and chronic neuropsychiatric disease by Dr. Brian Fallon, Columbia; a cardiac Lyme case by Dr. Betty Maloney, Partnership for Tick-Borne Diseases Education, a Lyme CME Provider; a review of clinical trials of Lyme Disease by Internist/epidemiologist Dr. Daniel Cameron; isolation of spirochetes from patients in the Southern U.S. by Dr. Kerry Clark, University of N. Florida; diagnosis and treatment of pediatric Lyme arthritis by Dr. Lise Nigrovic, Boston Children's Hospital; controlling the inflammatory response in the mouse model of Lyme arthritis by Southern Research Institute's Dr. Timothy Sellati; studies of viruses in ticks by Dr. Rafal Tokarz of Columbia University; clinical review of other TBDs such as Tularemia by Nantucket clinician Dr. Timothy Lepore, Bartonella by Dr. Marna Ericson of University of Minnesota, and Babesia in the blood supply by Dr. Evan Bloch of Johns Hopkins. Finally, the conference concluded with a public health talk on the spread of Lyme disease vector into the United States by the CDC's Dr. Ben Beard.

[Agenda](#)

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