Looking for the real facts on Lyme disease and other tick-borne diseases—what’s happening with coinfections such as Powassan, *B. miyamotoi* and with *Bartonella*? Why do Lyme patients often have low blood pressure—how does Lyme affect the heart, breathing, and digestive process when the autonomic nervous system is disrupted? How does inflammation from Lyme affect the brain and how can it be treated? Biofilms and persisters, what are they and are they causing chronic Lyme disease?

The Lyme Disease Association (LDA) & Columbia University’s 18th annual, conference, Lyme & Other Tick-Borne Diseases: What Clinicians Need to Know about an Expanding Epidemic was held at the Hilton Penns Landing on the banks of the Delaware River, in Philadelphia, PA, on Sept. 23 & 24, 2017.

The conference is designed for physicians and researchers but the public was invited to register and all registrants could attend a reception and network with the conference faculty. Medical students/post docs were encouraged to apply for scholarships. CME credits were offered by Columbia University to CME-registered physician attendees. The conference featured 20 faculty consisting of clinicians and researchers from
across the US and one from Canada.

The conference lectures detailed very current research that could alter the field. The Keynote speaker, Nicole Baumgarth, UC Davis, discussed *Bb* outmaneuvering the adaptive immune system. Other faculty included Garth Erlich, Drexel, Pan-Diagnostics for Lyme & Co-Infections; Eva Sapi UNH, Lyme & biofilms; Ying Zhang, Johns Hopkins, persisters & Lyme; John Aucott, immune biomarkers & Lyme; Sheila Arvikar, Mass Gen Hospital, autoimmune disorders following Lyme; Brian Fallon, Columbia, also Conference Director, Why Do Symptoms Persist?; Robert Bransfield, Rutgers-RWJ, inflammation & neuro Lyme; Diego Cadavid, Harvard/Biogen, treatment of neuro Lyme.

More speakers: Saravanan Thangamani, University of Texas Medical Branch, Powassan; Travis Taylor, University of Toledo, Powassan/Tick-Borne Flavivirus; Sam Telford, Tufts who discusses *Babesia microti*, *duncanai*, & *B. miyamotoi*; Ed Breitschwerdt, NCSU, *Bartonella*; Maya Jeraf, UNC, Alpha-gal meat allergy; Monica Embers, Tulane, next generation diagnostics; Safwan Jaradeh, Stanford, autonomic dysfunction & Lyme; Adrian Baranchuk, Queen’s University, Lyme Carditis and High Degree AV Block; Ahmet Z. Burakgazi, Virginia Tech, optic neuritis and probable Lyme; Christopher D. Paddock, CDC, Rickettsial Zoonoses Branch, Rickettsioses in the U.S.; Lorraine Johnson, LymeDisease.org, big data on Lyme research priorities; and a panel discussion of chronic Lyme. Poster presenters also presented their studies and were available to answer questions.

Thanks to the support of the Cohen Foundation for scholarship and other support. Thanks also to IGeneX for commercial support of the program.

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Dr. Brian Fallon, Columbia University; Dr. Monica Embers, Tulane National Primate Research Center; and Dr. Diego Cadavid, Rutgers, and Fulcrum Therapeutics, discuss topics of research to be presented at upcoming LDA / Columbia CME Conference September 23-24, 2017.

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