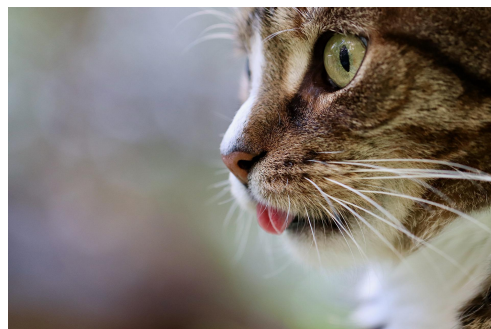


Cat Owners in Rural NE at Higher Risk of Lyme Disease?

In a recent publication of the *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, researchers utilized an online questionnaire to determine which factors were associated with Lyme disease. They compared responses between both patients with and without Lyme disease that were recruited through Social media outlets, Lyme disease support groups in NY, NJ & PA, as well as through a number of public presentation gatherings. Investigators developed a 66 question survey, where participants were asked questions regarding demographics, lifestyle, household characteristics, and use of tick-bite prevention measures. The study consisted of 185 active or past Lyme disease patients and 139 non-patients, with the majority of participants being white (95%) and female (65%).



The most prominent finding was that pet ownership was associated with an increased probability of Lyme disease (11.1%), and that this increase was limited to cat owners. They also noted that people living in rural areas had an increased risk for Lyme disease (36%) compared to those living in urban settings.

Results of the questionnaire showed that people who reported “knowing someone with Lyme Disease” were more likely to wear insect repellent and perform tick checks. Investigators suggest that the findings of this study provide opportunity for improved prevention, especially among cat owners living in rural settings.

[Access to full text publication here](#)

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