

Erythema Migrans—My Point of View

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There is an old saying that says "Wherever I take my eyes, I see things from my point of view." Here is my point of view as a primary care physician in a CDC designated nonendemic area for Lyme disease related erythema migrans (EM).

I have been studying erythema migrans in the lower midwest since 1988.¹⁻¹¹ On one occasion I saw three EMs in one day, but never four—that is until May 26, 2000. Four cases are presented, all evaluated in a single day. There were 3 other EMs at our clinic earlier in that week. None had recent tick exposure in Lyme disease endemic areas. Over the past dozen years, I have evaluated between 20 and 35 EMs per year. Lyme disease in the lower Midwest and South is still controversial and most physicians do not report it.

Case #1 T.L.

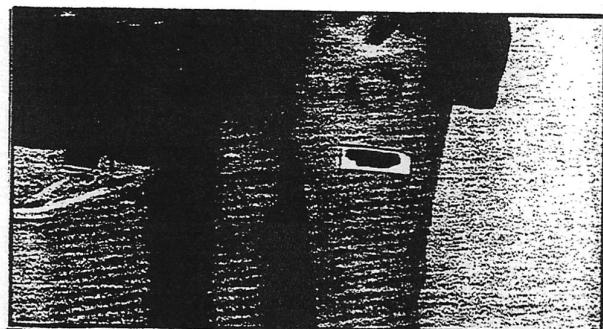


A 42-year-old female removed a nymphal-sized tick from the left side of her abdomen 2 weeks previously. The rash started 1 week ago and has enlarged to its current size of 7×12 cm. She averages 3 tick bites per year and has never had such a reaction.

From *Regional Primary Care, Inc., Cape Girardeau, Missouri.*

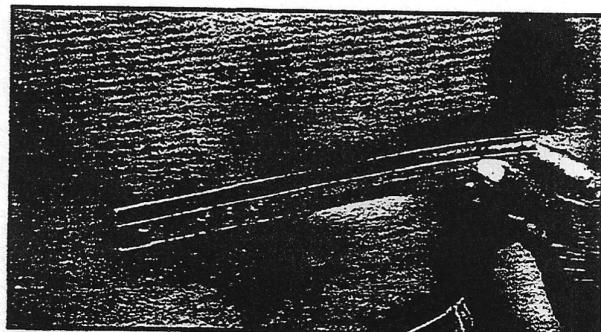
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Case #2 D.E.



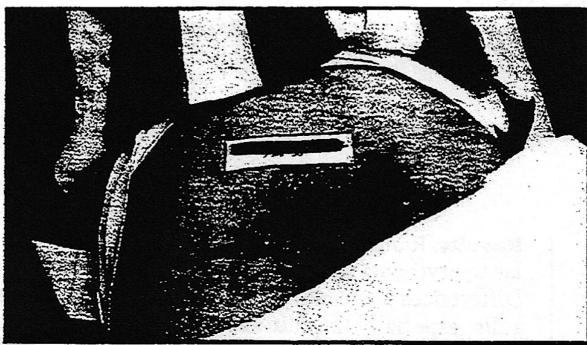
A 48-year-old female with a large tick exposure from gardening had an enlarging annular rash with a visible punctum. She has had no prior similar appearing rash. The annular erythema with central clearing was 7 cm in diameter. Additional complaints included dizziness, fatigue, and mild sore throat for 2 days.

Case #3 T.D.



A 43-year-old male removed an adult tick from his back 10 days previously at the site of the current rash, which was noticed the day before. He never previously had a rash following a tick bite. The rash was 6×9 cm with central clearing.

Case #4 J.L.



A 54-year-old male removed two imbedded nymph ticks on May 15 and May 18, which were obtained while walking near his pond. Only the tick bite in the groin area resulted in a spreading erythematous rash. The punctum was still visible. The 8×8 cm rash was partially obscured in the photo because of the hair. Previously, he never had a rash following a tick bite. Additional complaints included fatigue and myalgias for 4 days.

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