



**Protecting people and pets
from vector-borne disorders:**

Babesiosis, cat scratch disease,
Colorado tick fever, ehrlichiosis,
Master's disease, tick paralysis,
tularemia, Powassan encephalitis,
Rocky Mountain spotted fever,
dengue/dengue hemorrhagic fever,
West Nile virus, yellow fever,
Eastern equine encephalitis, and
plaque, Q-fever, relapsing fever,
and tularemia.

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Author, Management Consultant
Julie L. Gerberding, MD

Director
US. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
600 Clifton Road
Atlanta, GA 30333
jyg2@cdc.gov

June 29, 2007

Dear Dr. Gerberding:

I am writing on behalf of the Lyme Disease Foundation and its 100,000 member database of medical professionals, families, government officials, schools, businesses, and others, ***in strong support*** of the Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists (CSTE) Position Statement 07-ID-11: Revised National Surveillance Case Definition for Lyme disease that was adopted by CSTE on June 28, 2007.

This expanded definition is very good news for the whole Lyme disease community.

The current definition of "Confirmed" remains the same and includes individuals with an EM rashes in an endemic state, EM rash without any known exposure but positive test in any state, and a positive test with specific signs and symptoms of Lyme disease. The new categories of "Probable" and "Suspected" are significantly more inclusive of the broad range of presentations by patients. The *Probable* category includes all patients with a positive test and any signs or symptoms diagnosed by the patient's physician. The *Suspected* category includes all 1) patients with a positive test and no information on signs or symptoms of Lyme, and 2) all patients with an EM rash with no known exposure and no positive test.

The inclusion of an additional laboratory test, the single-tier IgG Western Blot, that qualifies a patient as having a *Confirmed* case of Lyme disease has the benefits of: 1. reducing the wait-time for results, 2. including as confirmed cases individuals who current test negative on the ELISA test, and 3. reduces the expense of the current two-tier (two test) system.

You may know the Lyme Disease Foundation as the organization that started the Lyme disease scientific advocacy movement or you may know me as the mother whose child had Lyme and died during a relapse when he was 5 years old. Either way, we have pushed the scientific and patient communities to find solutions for this and other tick-borne diseases.

This Expanded Case definition is the MOST IMPORTANT ADVANCE in public health and accurate reporting in the last decade. Please follow the recommendations made by the CSTE and adopt the changes.

I am also asking that the state epidemiologists also accept the CSTE recommended changes and that **Congressional members also strongly support** these broader case definitions.

Once again, congratulations to CSTE for their progressive new case definition. This will make our world a better place because federal recognition of these expanded categories will provide better understanding of the true scope of the problem our country faces. The sooner we understand the magnitude within each reporting category, the sooner our scientists and public can concentrate on the various groups to find solutions.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Karen Vanderhoof-Forschner, LLM, JD (health care), MBA, CPCU, CLU