

**New York State Department of Health
LYME DISEASE VACCINE - QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

- 1. Is the Lyme disease vaccine still being produced?** No, the manufacturer, GlaxoSmithKline (GSK), stopped production of the Lyme disease vaccine in February, 2002.
- 2. Why was vaccine production stopped?** GSK has stated that sales of the vaccine were too low to keep producing the vaccine.
- 3. Was there a problem with vaccine safety?** No. It was approved for use by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration in 1998. Subsequent studies did not identify any unexpected or unusual adverse events after the vaccine was administered.
- 4. Can I still get the vaccine?** No. GSK has requested no additional doses be administered and that remaining vaccine be returned.
- 5. What if I started, but haven't finished the 3 dose series? Will I be able to complete it?** You will not be able to complete the series at this time. It is important to use other personal protective measures to reduce the risk of tick bites and promptly remove any attached ticks. (See #7, below.)
- 6. If I received the vaccine, how long will I be protected?** The duration of protection is not known. There will be some level of protection for some period of time. However, preliminary studies have suggested that even after the three dose series, additional "booster" doses may have been needed to maintain protection. It is important to use other personal protective measures to reduce the risk of tick bites, and to promptly remove any attached ticks. (See #7.)
- 7. How can I now prevent Lyme disease?** Since the vaccine is not 100 percent effective in preventing Lyme disease and does not offer any protection against other tick-borne diseases, the strategies to prevent Lyme disease are the same regardless of vaccination status. It is important to use the following personal protective measures against Lyme disease:

When in tick habitat (wooded and overgrown grassy areas)

- **Wear light colored clothing** with a tight weave to spot ticks easily.
- **Wear enclosed shoes, long pants and a long sleeved shirt.** Tuck pant legs into socks or boots, and shirt into pants.
- **Consider using an insect repellent.** Follow label directions carefully.
- **Check clothes and any exposed skin frequently** for ticks while outdoors.

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#7 (continued)

- **Stay on cleared, well-traveled trails.** Avoid contact with vegetation, whenever possible.
- **Avoid sitting directly on the ground or on stone walls.**
- **Keep long hair tied back,** especially when gardening.
- **Do a final, full-body tick check at the end of the day.** Also check children and pets if they have been outdoors.
- **Remove attached ticks promptly.** Disease risk is greatly reduced if the tick is removed within 36 hours.

8. How do I safely remove an attached tick?

- Grasp the mouth parts with fine-pointed tweezers as close to the skin surface as possible. Pull up in a slow, steady motion.
- Be careful not to squeeze, crush or puncture the body of the tick, which may contain infectious fluids.
- If the mouth parts remain in the skin, remove the mouth parts as you would a splinter. See your health care provider if there are concerns about incomplete tick removal.
- Apply rubbing alcohol or hydrogen peroxide to disinfect the bite site. Wash hands.
- Do not attempt to remove ticks by using petroleum jelly, lit cigarettes or other home remedies. These methods may increase the chance of contracting a tick-borne disease.

Watch the bite site for the next 30 days for the appearance of a rash. Should you develop a rash or flu-like symptoms contact your health care provider.

If there are additional questions or concerns about the vaccine, please contact your health care provider or call the GlaxoSmithKline Customer Response Center, toll-free, at 1-888-825-5249.

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