

Tickitude 2013

A report published by  PetCareRx

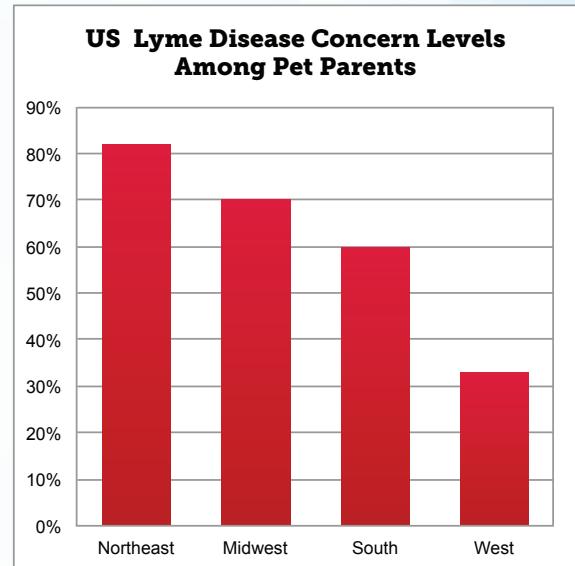
PetCareRx.com 'Tickitude' Study Reveals Majority of US Pet Parents Fear Lyme Disease

77% of US pet parents are worried about ticks this season and 64% are concerned about Lyme disease, according to the inaugural Tickitude Survey conducted by PetCareRx this spring. Over 400 pet households nationwide participated in the Tickitude study, designed to reveal how pet parents are feeling about the threat of ticks and understand what factors are driving their decisions around tick prevention and protection. Here are some of the surprising things we learned.

Country Cross-Section

Where you live significantly impacts how much you care about the threats of ticks and Lyme disease. Pet households in the Northeast and Midwest – two parts of the country with high concentrations of Lyme cases historically – are the most worried about this tick-borne disease with 82% of Northeast and 70% of Midwest pet parents concerned. This contrasts with the less anxious attitudes of those in the South (60% concerned about Lyme) and West (33% concerned).

Lyme disease experience and tick exposure levels also vary by region. The Northeast leads in total number of human and pet Lyme disease cases reported in the study, accounting for more than half of all cases recorded by respondents. Northeast pet parents are also the most likely to report having dealt with ticks on their pets (59%), followed by those in the South (51%), Midwest (41%) and West (29%). Having to remove a tick from a pet is a stressful situation for many pet parents; so stressful in fact, that 1 in 10 pet parents polled confess they would rather eat a bowl of their pet's food than have to remove a tick.



En-Lightning Statistics

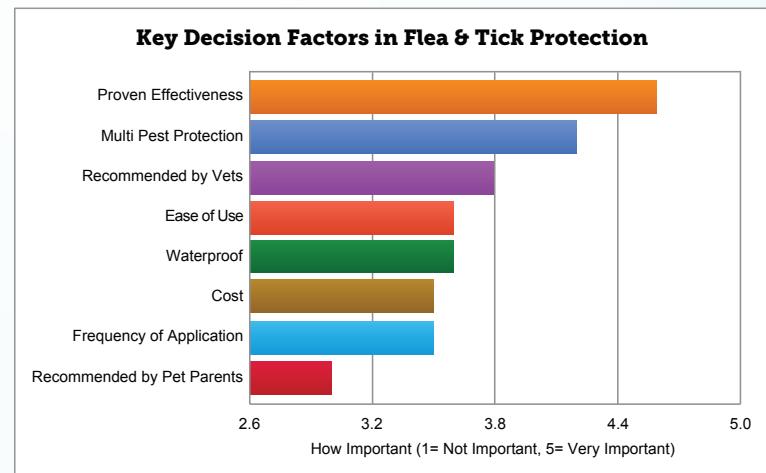
Overall Tickitude results revealed pet parents across all regions need to become better informed about Lyme disease risks. Only half of those surveyed were able to correctly identify all the ways that Lyme could be transmitted between humans and pets, including through contact with infected blood or bites from an infected tick. 9% of pet parents overall (a startling 26% in the West) mistakenly believe they have a better chance of being struck by lightning than getting Lyme disease. In fact, statistically speaking, the average American is 1,000 times more likely to contract Lyme disease than be struck by lightning.

Another surprising find was how much even tick-concerned pet parents allow their beloved dogs and cats in family member beds, a habit which can make it easier for ticks to travel to other members of the household. 65% confided their dogs and cats are "often" spending time in family members' beds, and even in households where pets have had Lyme, 85% of these admit their pets are still often on human beds.

Money Matters... And What Matters More

The vast majority of pet parents are purchasing tick protection products to keep their dogs and cats safe. Spot on or topical treatments are the preferred type used by 85% of pet parents polled, while flea and tick collars are used by only 3% of pet households surveyed. Tickitude responses indicate the number one purchase consideration in this category is how effective the product is in repelling ticks, and all the better if it can address fleas, too. Vet product recommendations are viewed as very influential and valued far more than what other pet parents suggest.

Overall, only 20% of pet parents said cost is the most important driver of their tick protection decision. According to Tickitude, the average pet parent spends about \$86 per year per pet on tick protection, and 44% report spending over \$100+ per year. Individual costs can vary per pet based on a number of considerations including the size and type of pet, method of protection selected, and local climate (whether in an area where tick treatment is required year round or during a shorter warmer season).



PetCareRx is supporting awareness of Lyme disease risks and prevention through its special coverage in Lyme disease articles and on the Wet Nose Press Blog on PetCareRx.com/blog, and distribution of pet flea and tick prevention products available on PetCareRx.com. PetCareRx is also a sponsor of Lyme Aid, the first of its kind event scheduled for May 22nd, designed to help educate consumers about the threats of Lyme disease. Stay tuned for our event coverage!