



# Southern Tick-Associated Rash Illness (STARI)

## Fact Sheet

### What is Southern Tick-Associated Rash Illness (STARI)?

- STARI is a Lyme-disease like illness that produces an expanding circular rash (erythema migrans) within seven days at the attachment site of a lone-star tick. The conditions is indistinguishable from early stages of Lyme disease.

### How is STARI Contracted?

- STARI is contracted from the bite of a lone-star tick, an aggressive tick species commonly found across southern states, including Oklahoma and within all regions of the Choctaw Nation Reservation. The cause of STARI remains unknown but may be associated with a bacterium called *Borrelia lonestari*, however, this is still being confirmed.

### Who Gets STARI?

- Anyone is at risk of contracting STARI, especially those who spend long amounts of time outdoors.

### What are the symptoms?

- Symptoms of STARI are similar to the early stages of Lyme disease. An expanding circular rash (sometimes bull's-eye appearing) and mild symptoms of fever, tiredness, headache, and muscle/joint pains have been reported. Persons may or may not recall being bit by a tick in the previous 2-3 weeks prior to symptom onset.
- No commercial lab tests are available for STARI due to the limited etiological data. Diagnosis is based upon a variety of factors considered by their healthcare provider, including symptoms, geographical region, and exposure risks.

### How can I prevent STARI?

- Preventing tick bites can reduce the chance of developing STARI, along with other tickborne illnesses.
- Before going outdoor, always apply EPA-approved insect repellent, walk in areas that are well kept and not overgrown, and always check yourself, clothing, pets, and children for ticks upon returning indoors.

The lone-star tick has a unique appearance and is associated with Southern Tick-Associated Rash Illness (STARI).



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