

**NATIONAL  
RESEARCH  
FUND FOR  
TICK-BORNE  
DISEASES, INC.**

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**LEARN ABOUT LYME**

- Lyme disease accounts for more than 95% of all vector-borne disease in the US
- Reported incidence of Lyme disease nearly doubled from 1991-2000
- Current testing methods cannot conclusively determine diagnosis or cure
- It is possible to contract more than one illness from a single tick bite
- The extent of emerging tick-borne diseases is unknown
- Children and teens are at greatest risk of contracting Lyme disease and may be more susceptible to other diseases

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**LYME DISEASE ORGANIZATION INVITES GRANT APPLICATIONS**

WILTON, CT – July 5, 2006 – The National Research Fund for Tick-Borne Diseases, Inc. (NRFTD), a non-profit organization dedicated to funding research of the highest caliber into tick-borne infections, including Lyme disease, is pleased to announce it will fund four pilot study projects. Scientists who hope to advance understanding of these insidious diseases are invited to submit grant applications.

Although Lyme disease is the most common vector-borne disease in the United States, scientific research has been limited. The need for knowledge has never been greater, since Lyme is spreading rapidly through the nation. The tri-state area, including New Jersey, New York and Connecticut, has been especially hard-hit, with some communities reporting as many as 54% of households affected. But the threat is national. Lyme disease case reports doubled from 1991 to 2000, then rose a stunning 40% between 2001 and 2002. Now, other tick-borne diseases such as babesia and ehrlichia are emerging as serious risks in many areas. Children, who spend much time outdoors, are especially vulnerable.

When caught and treated promptly, Lyme is normally quite curable. Unfortunately, the characteristic bulls-eye rash, which is the best diagnostic marker available, is absent in at least one-quarter of cases. It can also be overlooked or misdiagnosed fairly easily. As a result, and because commonly used laboratory tests are not definitive, Lyme can progress. Under these circumstances, Lyme can become a complicated illness, with the potential to cause cardiac, arthritic, and neurologic complications. In addition, ticks can transmit other diseases, either with Lyme (known as "co-infection") or separately, which can confuse diagnosis and treatment even further.

"Tick-borne infections like Lyme can be overwhelming not only to individual patients and their families, but also to society at large. Schools and employers, for example, may well feel significant effects," states Chairman of the Board, Leo J. Shea, III, Ph.D., of New York University Medical Center. "The NRFTD is determined to unravel the many mysteries surrounding tick-borne diseases. Since 1999, we've funded highly innovative and well-respected research in the field, choosing our projects carefully, with the help of internationally renowned researchers. We feel confident that, thanks to generous donors, answers can be found."

## **About NRFTD Research Grants**

NRFTD grants will be awarded to investigators whose projects demonstrate the potential to attract long-term funding by the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the National Science Foundation (NSF), or other scientific or biomedical agencies. The NRFTD is guided by its desire to transform scientific discoveries into tangible results, such as publication in peer-reviewed medical journals and presentations at scientific conferences.

The current offerings will be funded for either one or two years and carry a maximum direct cost of \$50,000. Up to four applications will be funded. Scientists worldwide who wish to perform innovative pilot project research on any aspect of established or emerging tick-borne diseases -- including those caused by Lyme disease and relapsing fever borrelia, anaplasma, babesia, bartonella, ehrlichia and rickettsia species, and their tick vectors -- are invited to apply.

The deadline for applications is 5:00 P.M. EDT on September 1, 2006. The grant application as well as additional information can be found at [www.nrftd.org](http://www.nrftd.org).

## **About the National Research Fund for Tick-Borne Diseases, Inc.**

The NRFTD is a nonprofit organization devoted to funding scientific research in the rapidly expanding field of tick-borne diseases. It is determined to advance scientific understanding of these complicated infections by sponsoring innovative research of the highest quality at premier institutions throughout the world.

The NRFTD was founded in 1999 to address the complex and critical research questions raised by thousands of patients afflicted with emerging tick-borne diseases, including Lyme disease, relapsing fever borrelia, anaplasmosis, babesiosis, bartonella and ehrlichiosis. The need for answers has grown markedly as Lyme disease has spread dramatically throughout the country and as other tick-borne infections have been recognized as public health threats.

For more information about the NRFTD, or to make a tax-deductible donation, visit [www.nrftd.org](http://www.nrftd.org).

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