

**NAPA-SOLANO-YOLO-MARIN COUNTY  
PUBLIC HEALTH LABORATORY**  
2201 COURAGE DRIVE, MS 9-200  
FAIRFIELD, CA 94533  
(707) 784-4410 FAX (707) 423-1979



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| <b>Test</b>                                  | Tick identification and testing for the Lyme disease agent in ticks   |
| <b>Test Description</b>                      | This testing involves tick identification to the genus level and determination of whether the submitted tick is infected with <i>Borrelia burgdorferi</i> bacteria the causative agent of Lyme disease. To detect the presence of <i>Borrelia burgdorferi</i> , an indirect fluorescent antibody (IFA) test is performed on the contents of the tick's mid-gut.   |
| <b>Acceptable specimens</b>                  | The entire tick should be submitted<br><br>Ticks with missing body parts may or may not be satisfactory for identification and/or Lyme disease testing depending on the condition of the tick and the extent to which it has dried out.   |
| <b>Specimen collection</b>                   | Ticks should be removed immediately upon noticing them. Follow these <a href="#">instructions for tick removal</a> .  |
| <b>Specimen storage</b>                      | Ticks can be stored refrigerated (2–8 °C) in a sealed plastic bag or a sealed container, placed directly on a moist paper towel or cotton ball. The paper towel or cotton ball should only be moistened with water.<br><br><i>Note: Ticks stored in formalin or alcohol solutions CANNOT be tested for Lyme disease agent (i.e., detection of Borrelia burgdorferi). Also, placing the tick in toilet paper, which can easily shred, or sticking the tick to scotch tape may lead to an unsatisfactory result.</i>          |
| <b>Specimen shipping</b>                     | Ticks can be mailed to the laboratory wrapped in a moist paper towel inside a sealed plastic bag. Alternately, ticks can be dropped off at the laboratory. A completed <a href="#">tick test requisition form</a> must accompany the tick.  |
| <b>CPT code</b>                              | 87168   |
| <b>Test fee</b>                              | Refer to the posted fee schedule. A check or <a href="#">online payment</a> receipt number must be submitted with the tick.   |
| <b>Report availability (turnaround time)</b> | Tick testing for Lyme disease is performed once per week, typically at the end of the week. A tick must be received by the laboratory (not a drop-off location) by Wednesday to ensure that it is tested that week. Persons, who submit a tick that tests positive for <i>Borrelia burgdorferi</i> , will receive a phone call after testing. Negative reports will only be mailed to submitters because of the high volume of tick testing. Please allow for 5 business days from the date of testing to receive a report. |