

Singer Justin Bieber reveals he has Lyme disease

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Singers Justin Bieber (left) and Ariana Grande take the stage at Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival in California in April 2019. Photo by: Getty Images

Singer Justin Bieber said that he has Lyme disease. He also said he will discuss his situation further in an upcoming documentary series.

In a post on his Instagram account on January 8, the 25-year-old Canadian singer explained that he was recently diagnosed with the disease. His often-discussed sickly appearance, he said, is a byproduct of illness.

"A Rough Couple Of Years"

The pop star also told his followers he has battled chronic mononucleosis. That illness has affected his skin, brain and overall health.

More details about his Lyme disease will be revealed in an upcoming documentary series, he said.

"It's been a rough couple of years but getting the right treatment that will help treat this so far incurable disease and I will be back and better than ever," Bieber wrote.

Each year, about 30,000 cases of Lyme disease are reported to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

The illness is transmitted through the bite of infected black-legged ticks (also known as deer ticks). The sesame-seed-sized adults and their poppy-seed-sized babies attach themselves to hard-to-see areas, such as an armpit or a scalp, for 36 to 48 hours. During that time, they pass on their Lyme disease bacterium. Nymph ticks, which are smaller than adult ticks, are more likely to affect people because their size makes them harder to spot.

Watch Out For Ticks

Last April, the CDC reported that certain species of ticks have expanded their geographic range along with their ability to spread illnesses such as Lyme disease. Counties in the U.S. Northeast and Upper Midwest are considered high-risk areas.

A bitten person can develop a rash around the bite area. The rash will look like a bull's eye and could feel hot to the touch. For those who don't develop the characteristic Lyme rash, diagnosing the disease can be more difficult because it can mimic the symptoms of other diseases. These can range from flu-like symptoms to severe headaches.

If caught early enough, Lyme disease can be cured with antibiotics. If the disease is only discovered after it has fully developed, patients can suffer significant problems. These include joint inflammation, heart rhythm problems and brain and nervous system complications.

Other Celebrities Fighting Lyme Disease

Model Hailey Bieber, Justin Bieber's wife, urged people who lessened the severity of the illness to educate themselves.

She also thanked other celebrities who have informed the public about life with Lyme disease. Among those she mentioned are models Bella and Gigi Hadid and their mother Yolanda.

Canadian singer Avril Lavigne is among those who have talked about their struggles with Lyme disease.

Lavigne told Billboard magazine in 2018 that she was bedridden for two years while she was battling the illness. She founded the Avril Lavigne Foundation, which provides education about Lyme disease and funding for research.

Lavigne tweeted that she was sorry that Justin Bieber was diagnosed with the disease. "The fact that it's so hard to diagnose and is so debilitating was something I suffered through also," she wrote.