



DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
ARMED FORCES EPIDEMIOLOGICAL BOARD
5109 LEESBURG PIKE
FALLS CHURCH, VA 22041-3258



REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

AFEB (15-1a) 99-2

25 May 1999

MEMORANDUM FOR THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE(HEALTH AFFAIRS)
THE SURGEON GENERAL, DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
THE SURGEON GENERAL, DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
THE SURGEON GENERAL, DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE

SUBJECT: Armed Forces Epidemiological Board (AFEB) Recommendation for Lyme Disease

1. At its April 1999 meeting, the Board considered the issue of the appropriate use of Lyme vaccine in members of the armed services. After reviewing the literature, and examining the impact of Lyme disease on the military, the Board makes the following recommendations:

- a. **LYME VACCINE IS ONLY ONE ADJUNCT TO THE PREVENTION OF LYME DISEASE. PERSONAL TICK PREVENTION MEASURES SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED AND COMPLIANCE STRENGTHENED AS THE PRIMARY, AND MOST EFFECTIVE, METHOD OF PREVENTING LYME DISEASE.**
- b. **THE BURDEN OF LYME DISEASE IN THE MILITARY IS UNCLEAR. STUDIES EXAMINING THE PREVALENCE OF LYME DISEASE, AS WELL AS STUDIES EXAMINING THE INCIDENCE OF LYME INFECTION AS A SPECIFIC FUNCTION OF MILITARY DUTIES SHOULD BE INITIATED. THESE STUDIES SHOULD INCLUDE DATA ON IXODES DISTRIBUTION, AND THE PREVALENCE OF BORRELIA INFECTION OF IXODES TICKS ON MILITARY INSTALLATIONS.**
- c. **IN THE INTERIM, THE BOARD RECOMMENDS CONSIDERATION OF USE OF LYME VACCINE UNDER THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS:**
 - 1) **CONDITIONS SPECIFIED BY THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON IMMUNIZATION PRACTICES DOCUMENT ON THE PREVENTION OF LYME DISEASE.**

2) **FOR SELECTED OCCUPATIONAL GROUPS CONSIDERED TO BE AT HIGH RISK BECAUSE THEIR MILITARY DUTIES PLACE THEM IN HIGH RISK ENVIRONMENTS WHERE FREQUENT AND PROLONGED EXPOSURE TO BORRELIA-INFECTED IXODES TICKS MIGHT BE ANTICIPATED. UNDER THIS CONDITION, VACCINE SHOULD BE USED IN ADVANCE OF ANTICIPATED EXPOSURE. LOCAL CONDITIONS AND RISK INFORMATION SHOULD BE USED IN DETERMINING RISK.**

2. The above recommendations were unanimously approved by the Subcommittee.

FOR THE ARMED FORCES EPIDEMIOLOGICAL BOARD:



GREGORY A. POLAND
Chairman, Infectious
Disease Subcommittee



BENEDICT M. DINIEGA
Colonel, USA, MC
AFEB Executive Secretary

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- The Surgeon General, USA
- The Surgeon General, USAF
- The Surgeon General, USN
- Board Members
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- Ch, Prev Med Div, OTSG-DA
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- HQ, USMC, PMO, LCDR Ann P. Fallon
- Dir. Occup Hlth & Prev Med Div, BUMED-DN
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- CDR, USAMEDCOM, ATTN: MCCS-FC
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- Dir, Med Resources, Plans & Policy Div. (N931)
- Head, Epi Dept., NEPMU 5
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