

Tick victims contest Lyme disease studies

# Experts have 'got it wrong'

Lauren Dickson

WHILE experts maintain that there is no presence of Lyme disease in Australia, northern beaches victims are insisting otherwise.

Studies have concluded that those diagnosed with the disease must have been bitten by infected ticks while travelling in Europe or the United States.

But try telling that to Avalon resident Sarah Bayes, who suffered from a tick bite for 16 years that she received in her garden.

"I contracted what was described as a Lyme-like illness from a tick bite in 1989," she said.

"It was five years before I was diagnosed and my illness was acknowledged as something."

As Ms Bayes became progressively sicker she exhibited symptoms similar to Lyme disease.

"I was a very fit and healthy person prior to the

- Most common tick-borne disease transmitted to humans by the bite of infected ticks.

- Early symptoms include unusual fatigue, low-grade fevers, swollen glands, body aches, circular rash around bite.

- Left untreated later symptoms may involve

arthritic pain to joints, heart and central nervous system problems.

- In most cases the infection can be eliminated by antibiotics, especially if treated early.

- Late or delayed treatment can be disabling for the sufferer and difficult to treat.

- Rarely fatal if treated.

tick," she said. "I had unusual fatigue, heart problems and arthritis. They did all sorts of tests on me but they came back normal."

It wasn't until Ms Bayes was treated by an infectious disease specialist that she was put on an antibiotic treatment given to sufferers of Lyme disease.

"I'm aware of the study that has been done by experts, but as someone who has suffered the symptoms I can assure you there is something there," she said.

A victim who did not

wish to be named was forced to move out of the northern beaches under doctors' recommendations due to the high rate of ticks in the area.

"My symptoms are ongoing. It does subside a little but as soon as I try and lead a normal life, like gardening for a day, it takes me two weeks to recover," she said.

"I can't understand why the Health Department is in denial when there are so many cases on their books."



Lyme disease sufferer Sarah Bayes developed symptoms after picking up a tick in her Avalon garden.

Picture: SIMON COCKSEGE -PP401832

## quicknews

### Anniversary doco

TO celebrate the first anniversary of its popular Green Up Your Life! Sustainable Living Program, Manly Council will be rescreening the documentary *Home* at the Manly Cinemas tonight from 6.30pm. Directed by Yann Arthus-Bertrand, *Home* was filmed and shot entirely from the sky in high-definition over 50 countries.

### Free lagoon trips

THE Friends of Narrabeen Lagoon Catchment will run three free kayak trips on the lagoon to educate people about this pristine environment. The trips will be held on August 29, September 5 and October 31, with the first two incorporating a guided "bird walk", a paddle around the lagoon and presentation on the ecology of the area. The October paddle will visit Middle and Deep creeks with commentary by wildlife author Louise Egerton. Breakfast and morning tea will be provided, while hire boats will be available for \$48 per person. To register, call 0417 502 056 or email [tonycarr@ozemail.com.au](mailto:tonycarr@ozemail.com.au).

### Heritage group AGM

THE Pittwater Natural Heritage Association annual general meeting will be held with lunch and a guest speaker on Saturday, August 28, at the Katandra Bushland Sanctuary. It will begin at noon. Katandra Sanctuary is in Lane Cove Rd, Ingleside. For information call Marita Macrae on 9918 3368 or 0439 409 202.

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Contact us to register

Connecting family Carers to Services and support - to help care for a relative/friend who has a longer term illness, disability or is frail aged.

Our website provides a range of information  
[www.nscchealth.nsw.gov.au/carersupport/aboutus](http://www.nscchealth.nsw.gov.au/carersupport/aboutus)  
Education, activities and support groups are under the Event Diary  
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- Check out activities in our region, bookings open now.

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\*Specials start on 4/8/10 & available until 10/8/10 at Time & Tide. Only while stocks last. The Time and Tide practices the responsible serving of alcohol and gaming requirements

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