

Report on 2023 Claims for Treatment of Lyme Disease and Other Tick-Borne Illnesses

PREPARED BY THE MAINE BUREAU OF INSURANCE
March 2024

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Background

Pursuant to 24-A M.R.S. §4302(5), the Superintendent of Insurance must report to the Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services annual data related to insurance claims made for the diagnosis and treatment of Lyme disease and other tick-borne illnesses, for all covered individuals in the State of Maine. This report covers calendar year 2023.

Included within this report is data about:

- the number of claims made for the diagnosis and treatment of Lyme disease and other tick-borne illnesses;
- the total dollar amounts of those claims;
- the number of claim denials and reasons for those denials;
- the number and outcome of internal appeals; and
- the number of external appeals related to the treatment of Lyme disease and other tick-borne illnesses.

Reported tick-borne illnesses in Maine include:

- Lyme Disease (singular)
- Multiple Tickborne Illnesses (any combination)
- Other (any tickborne illness other than Lyme)

Insurance carriers licensed to write Health insurance coverage in Maine are required to report claims information for all tick-borne illnesses to the Bureau of Insurance.

Data includes claims for all insured Maine residents; however, the data does not include MaineCare or Medicare claims. Respondents include active insurers with authority to write Health insurance in Maine. There was a 100% response rate from insurers for this report.

Tick-Borne Illness Claims by Category

Table 1 shows what carriers reported for the number of claims submitted, paid, and denied by category of tick-borne illness, as well as the total amount paid for claims. These figures represent the number of claims reported, not the number of enrollees with a tick-borne illness. One enrollee may have several claims within the calendar year relating to a tick-borne illness.

The reported data includes claims made for the diagnosis and treatment of tick-borne illnesses for covered individuals in Maine in 2023.

The “Percentage of Claims Paid” column is calculated by dividing the number of claims paid for a category (e.g., Lyme) by the number of claims submitted for that category. The total paid claims represent less than 0.2% of all paid claims in 2023. Compared with 2022, submitted claims increased 61% and claims paid jumped 25%.

Table 1. Tick-Borne Illness Claims by Category, 2023					
Category	Submitted	Paid	Denied	% of Claims Paid	Total Paid
Lyme Disease (singular)	6,908	6,050	858	87.58%	\$1,026,054
Multiple Tickborne Illnesses (any combination)	210	189	21	90.00%	\$61,179
Other (any singular tickborne disease other than Lyme)	5,195	4,052	1,143	78.00%	\$1,246,539
Total:	12,313	10,291	2,022	83.58%	\$2,333,773

Table 1.1 Tick-Borne Illness Claims by Category, 2022					
Category	Submitted	Paid	Denied	% of Claims Paid	Total Paid
Lyme Disease (singular)	5,328	4,766	562	89.45%	\$738,264
Multiple Tickborne Illnesses (any combination)	62	51	11	82.26%	\$42,002
Other (any singular tickborne disease other than Lyme)	2,268	2,082	186	91.80%	\$1,092,078
Total:	7,658	6,899	759	90.09%	\$1,872,344

Reasons for Denied Tick-Borne Illness Claims

Table 2 provides the reasons given for denied claims related to any treatment for tick-borne illnesses. A claim may have multiple reasons for denial.

The top three reasons for denial (excluding “other reasons”) were Duplicate Claim, Incorrect Coding, and More Information Requested/Not Received.

Various reasons were provided for the Other Reasons for Denial category including: prescription refills requested too soon or not covered, and billing issues.

Table 2. Reasons for Denied Tick-Borne Illness Claims, 2023	
Reasons for Denial	Number of Denied Claims
Considered Experimental/Investigational	4
Coverage Terminated	78
Duplicate Claim	209
Incorrect Coding	312
Maximum Benefits Exceeded	16
More Information Requested/Not Received	79
No Pre-Authorization	34
Non-Participating Provider	2
Not a Covered Benefit	149
Not Medically Necessary	2
Pre-existing Conditions Exclusion	0
Other Reasons for Denial	1,211
Total:	2,096

Appeals/Reconsiderations/External Reviews for All Tick-Borne Illnesses

As indicated in Table 3, there were three internal appeals or reconsiderations conducted by insurance companies reporting data to the Bureau of Insurance, and the Bureau had four requests for independent external reviews relating to tick-borne illnesses in 2023.

Table 3. Number of Appeals/Reconsiderations and External Reviews for All Tick-Borne Illnesses, 2023				
	Upheld	Overtured	Other	Total
Appeals/Reconsideration (Internal)	0	0	0	0
Independent External Reviews	8	0	0	8
Total:	8	0	0	8