Quicker, More Accurate Lyme Disease Tests

New tests to detect early Lyme disease could replace existing tests that often do not clearly identify the infection before health problems occur.

In an analysis published on December 7 in Clinical Infectious Diseases, scientists from over 20 academic centers, industry and public health agencies, including Rutgers University, Harvard University, Yale University, and the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases of the National Institutes of Health, say new diagnostic methods offer a better chance for more accurate detection of the infection from the Lyme bacteria.

"New tests are at hand that offer more accurate, less ambiguous test results that can yield actionable results in a timely fashion," said Steven Schutzer, a physician-scientist at NJMS and senior author. "Improved tests will allow for earlier diagnosis, which should improve patient outcomes."

Schutzer and his colleagues say more accurate testing would help doctors decide when to prescribe the antibiotics used to clear the infection and help avoid severe long-term health problems. Antibody tests can take three weeks or more for the antibody levels to reach a point where the tests can pick up a positive result.

"New tests are more exact and are not as susceptible to the same false-positive or false-negative results associated with current tests," added Schutzer.

For more information about Schutzer’s research, please visit: njms.rutgers.edu/schutzer.

LEADING By Example

NJMS students Talicia Jackson and Adbul Kazi have been elected to leadership roles with the Association of American Medical Colleges - Organization for Student Representatives (AAMC-OSR). Their respective positions began November 3, 2017, during the AAMC Annual Meeting in Boston.

A second-year student, Jackson was elected as National Delegate for Community and Diversity. One of five national delegates, she will also serve as Student Liaison on the Board. As part of the Board, Jackson will be responsible for setting the national agenda and priorities for the OSR and managing all OSR activities and projects, including planning the OSR Annual Meeting program.

"The student voice is crucial in medical education," said Jackson. "My goal is to work with student leaders to address concerns and issues of medical students on the national level. I look forward to working with regional delegates to develop and promote student and AAMC diversity initiatives."

Kazi, a third-year student, was elected as Northeast Regional Delegate for Communications. "Medical students face many challenges, including student loans, the residency application process, and mental wellness. I hope to add to the discussion with ideas and solutions inspired by my experience as a member of the American Medical Association. I believe the impact that we as students make in the local community is profound."

Message from the Dean

When I reflect on 2017, I am gratified by all that we accomplished at the Rutgers New Jersey Medical School. Through the efforts of our exceptional faculty, students, and staff, we continued to raise our national profile while solidifying our standing as a leader in research, patient care, community relations, and education.

During 2017, in addition to recruiting world-class faculty, we continued to cultivate student leaders like Jose Medina, who became the first NJMS student to serve on the Medical Education National Committee as Medical Education Delegate for the Northeast Region for the AAMC’s Organization of Student Representatives. Furthermore, our researchers remained at the top of their fields, publishing in prestigious journals and securing coveted grants and awards.

Looking to the year ahead, our ongoing Medical Science Building feasibility study is set to pave the way toward the modernization of our primary education and research facility. And our newly formed partnerships with RWJBarnabas Health and New Bridge Health stand to further strengthen our clinical enterprise.

With these and many other initiatives underway, 2018 has the potential to be one of NJMS’s best years yet.

In health,
Excellence is the Standard

The Global Tuberculosis Institute (GTBI) at NJMS has been designated by the National Centers of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) as one of four tuberculosis National Centers of Excellence.

Accompanied by a five-year grant award of nearly $6.7 million, this designation is the first-ever applied for TB diagnosis, treatment, control, research, and training and education. In aggregated total, CDC has funded GTBI over $50 million since it was initially established in 1993.

National Centers of Excellence will support regional TB control and prevention efforts by focusing on two major activities: 1) increasing human resource development through education and training activities and 2) increasing the capacity for appropriate medical evaluation and management of persons with TB disease and latent TB infection through medical consultation.

For more information about GTBI, please visit the center's website at: globaltb.njms.rutgers.edu.

Congratulations, Tanya Norment!
2017 Clement A. Price Human Dignity Award Recipient

People who work behind the scenes don’t always get the recognition they deserve. But recognition came knocking at Tanya Norment’s door last spring when the program administrator for the NJMS Healthcare Foundation Center for Humanism and Medicine received Rutgers University’s 2017 Clement A. Price Human Dignity Award. The award recognizes outstanding individuals or groups who have demonstrated extraordinary achievement and commitment to promoting and practicing diversity, inclusion, equity, and access within the University and/or in partnership with community organizations.

“I was honored to receive this award” says Norment. “I had the opportunity to meet Clement Price. He was an inspiration.”

A Douglass College graduate who began her career as a teacher and later decided to go into nursing, Norment joined NJMS in 2003. In her role at NJMS, she mentors humanism fellows and seeks outreach opportunities for them to engage their communities.

Norment is passionate about helping students transform their ideas from conceptualization to reality.

“I have one of the best jobs in the world working with our students and being involved with community outreach,” Norment says. “Whenever the students come up with an idea for a project—some way to help others—the answer is always ‘yes!’”

Excerpted from an article originally appearing in Pulse magazine: njms.rutgers.edu/PM_Fall2017

Four Safety Precaution Tips You Can Use

Maintaining a safe and secure campus is a top priority for the Rutgers University Police Department (RUPD). With that goal in mind, RUPD provides a number of tools and services to members of the community to help create a safer environment. The following tips are easy to implement and are intended to help individuals remain safe on campus.

Subscribe to the Emergency Notification System (ENS)
ENS is used to send emergency text alerts to subscribers on their cell phones during situations of emergency as deemed by Public Safety. Manage your ENS subscription via the following link: personalinfo.rutgers.edu/

Public Safety Escort Service

o RUPD provides safety escorts to students, faculty, and staff upon request. The escorts provide community members with personalized service to their vehicles, campus residence, or the University’s mass transit system. To request a Public Safety Escort or for more info, call 732-932-7211, or visit rupd.rutgers.edu/escorts.php.

Text RUPD

o This service offers faculty, staff, and students an alternative mode to communicate non-emergency concerns or requests for help to RUPD. Community members in Newark must text ‘RUNWK’ and their message to 69050. For more info, visit: rupd.rutgers.edu/text.php.

Report Suspicious Activity

o Don’t be lulled into complacency by clichés. For your safety and the safety of the community, if you see something, say something. Report suspicious activity to RUPD by calling 973-972-4491 or 973-353-5111.

RUPD encourages community members to store all of the above-mentioned telephone numbers in their phones and make sure that the numbers are easily accessible. In case of an emergency, always dial 9-1-1. From a university telephone, first dial 9 -1 to obtain an outside line, then 9-1-1. For more information about RUPD-Newark Division, visit http://rupd.rutgers.edu/newark.php.

In the Spotlight: Office for Diversity and Community Engagement

“ODACE is a game changer,” says John P. Sanchez, MD, MPH, associate dean, diversity and inclusion. “We strive to help trainees consider clinical and academic careers by becoming the next generation of physicians, faculty and leaders driving clinical, research, service, and educational excellence.”

Learn more about these and other ODACE programs by visiting: njms.rutgers.edu/odace

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