

# *Antibiotic treatment of Lyme borreliosis: our experiences*

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## SUMMARY

Treatment with antibiotics is indicated in all stages of Lyme borreliosis and for all clinical manifestations. It has been, however, most effective in the early course of illness. The choice of antibiotic depends on many factors, including the efficacy, pharmacokinetics, side effects, expected compliance, and price. For the majority of manifestations, the most effective antibiotic, the optimal dosage, and the most appropriate duration of treatment have not been exactly determined.

Basic principles of antibiotic therapy of Lyme borreliosis and recommendations for treatment of this disease as used in Slovenia are presented.

The objective of this report is to summarize the principles of antibiotic therapy of Lyme borreliosis and to outline the treatment approach as used in Slovenia.

### *Basic principles of treatment*

Clinical signs and symptoms are essential for the correct diagnosis of Lyme borreliosis (LB). Only a reliable diagnosis enables rational treatment. The fact is that in Lyme borreliosis with its insufficient clinical specificity and the lack of standardized serological tests, a reliable diagnosis is usually not an easy goal to achieve. Solid knowledge of clinical manifestations is a prerequisite for rational treatment (1).

Treatment with antibiotics is indicated in all stages

of LB and for all clinical manifestations, it is however most effective in the early course of the illness (2). The efficacy of treatment depends on clinical manifestations (severity, duration, and involvement of a particular organ/organ system) and the choice of an effective antibiotic that should be given in an optimal dosage and for an appropriate time, and on the compliance of the patient. Selection of an antibiotic implicates many factors including the efficacy, pharmacokinetics, side effects, expected compliance, and price.

The aim of antibiotic therapy is to eradicate bacteria causing infection. Eradication of pathogenic bacteria is a precondition, but unfortunately not a guarantee for cure, nor for exclusion of eventual sequelae. Healing of the injured tissue (caused by bacteria or associated inflammation) may take much longer than the effective eradication. In such cases some clinical features may

## KEY WORDS

Lyme borreliosis, treatment, antibiotics, Slovenia

