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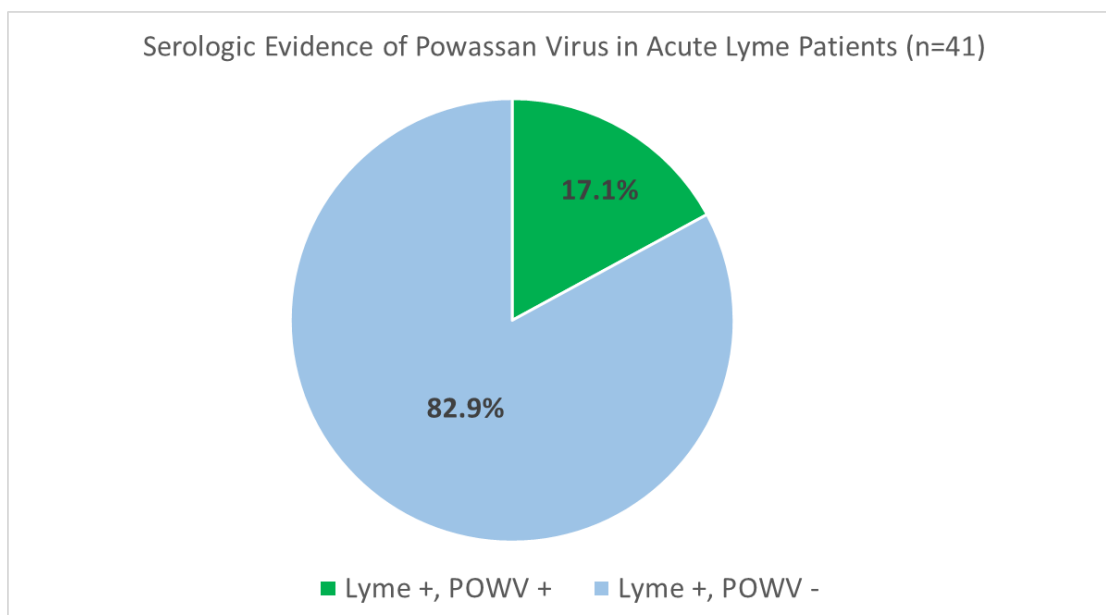
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Powassan Virus Co-infection in Wisconsin Lyme Patients

Waukesha, Wis.—Coppe Laboratories and collaborators report the results of a retrospective analysis of patients with suspected Lyme disease who were also tested for co-infection with Powassan virus. The studies are published online in *Emerging Infectious Diseases*.

Powassan virus is transmitted by the same tick that transmits *Borrelia burgdorferi*, the bacteria that causes Lyme disease. Although symptoms of Powassan infection resemble those of Lyme disease in early infection, the virus does not respond to antibiotic therapy. The virus can be transmitted from ticks to humans within just 15 minutes of attachment.

In the study, 95 patients with suspected tick-borne disease (TBD) and 50 patients with no recent tick exposure were tested by Coppe Laboratories for suspected infection with Lyme bacteria and Powassan. Evidence of current or prior Lyme disease was present in 66.3% of TBD and 8% of non-tick exposed patients ($p < 0.0001$). Of the 41 TBD patients with evidence of acute Lyme disease, seven (17.1%) tested positive for Powassan exposure, providing strong evidence that infection with Powassan virus may be underdiagnosed and that the virus may contribute to symptoms often associated with a Lyme disease diagnosis.



Dr. Konstance Knox, CEO of Coppe Laboratories stated that “An estimated 10-20 % of Lyme disease patients continue to have symptoms following the recommended course of antibiotics. The 17.1% of Lyme disease patients concurrently infected with Powassan virus in this study approximates the percentage of patients who do not make a full recovery. Powassan virus testing in these patients might provide additional answers to the long-term symptomatology. Our goal with Coppe Laboratories’ Powassan virus testing is two-fold: To help physicians provide better diagnoses and information to patients and to gain a more realistic understanding of the true incidence of Powassan virus infection in the Midwest.”

Facts about the Powassan Virus (POWASSAN VIRUS)

- The Powassan virus incubation period (time from tick bite to onset of symptoms) ranges from one week to one month.
- Common symptoms include fever, headache, vomiting, weakness, confusion, stiff neck and in more serious cases, seizures, speech difficulty and loss of coordination.
- Powassan virus can infect the central nervous system, resulting in severe neuroinvasive disease: encephalitis and meningitis.
- About 50% of patients who experience Powassan virus encephalitis have permanent neurological symptoms, such as recurring headaches, muscle weakness and memory problems.
- Approximately 10% of Powassan virus encephalitis cases are fatal.
- The CDC has noted that Powassan virus risk is present in the same areas where Lyme disease is prevalent.

About Coppe Laboratories – www.coppelabs.com

Coppe Laboratories is a highly specialized, CLIA-certified diagnostic laboratory providing a spectrum of laboratory tests with an emphasis on the interaction between infection and immunity. Our mission is to eliminate barriers experienced by physicians and patients by converting scientific research tools into innovative diagnostic tests. Our primary goal is to provide physicians and their patients with accurate, high quality and clinically relevant results that translate into better treatments and improved outcomes.

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