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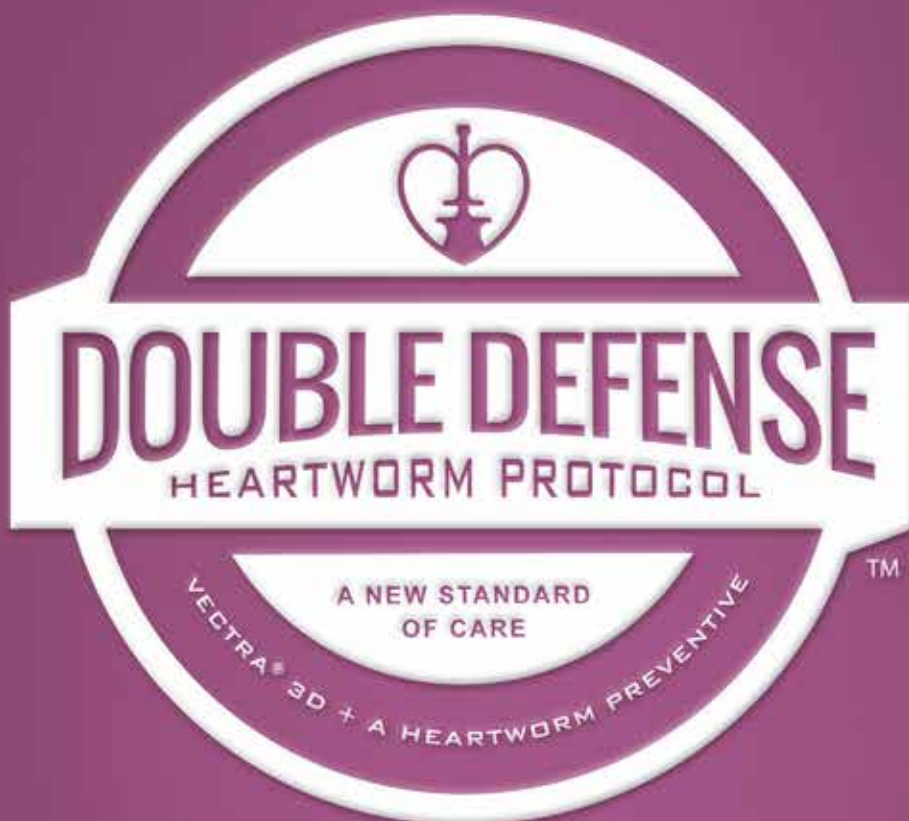
Winning Them Over

**TVC Member/Owner
Tammy Stevenson
says the little
things can pay
big dividends in
earning the
flea/tick purchases
from clients**





After fighting heartworms
the same way for decades
and nothing has changed.
It's time to start a new fight.



For decades we've been fighting heartworms with the same preventive protocols. Yet, heartworm infections are not only still here, they're spreading and increasing in prevalence. Something has to change. A groundbreaking, recent study conducted by a third-party investigator shows that Vectra® 3D provides an extra layer of defense against heartworms. By repelling and killing mosquitoes, Vectra® 3D was 100% effective in blocking the transmission of microfilariae from dogs to mosquitoes¹. So why continue to recommend half the protection? A new standard of care has arrived.

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¹J.W. McCall, E. Hodgkins, M. Varlout, A. Mansour, U. DiCosto. Inhibition of the transmission of *Dirofilaria immitis* to mosquitoes by weekly exposure of microfilaremic dogs treated topically with dinotefuran-permethrin-pyriproxyfen to uninfected *Aedes aegypti*.





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How you can help TVC keep your favorite vendor – (TVC NDA Matters)

By Dr. Ronald Anders, TVC Board Member and Treasurer

It may not seem like a big deal, but it is. Shar-

ing a TVC email, or something on the members' only website, or sharing the TVC pricing of products affects the entire TVC community. That's why we have the non-disclosure agreement, and why we implore our members to adhere to it in order not to compromise the benefits of the Cooperative.

Here are some common ways TVC Members may share information that could violate the NDA:

NDA's are an important business tool used to further negotiations. TVC needs its members to abide by their NDA to ensure the success of TVC. Failure to abide by the NDA may result in termination from TVC.

- Providing a current invoice from a vendor in the TVC program
- Renegotiating with your current vendor using TVC information
- Providing or sharing TVC E-mails, Program Sheets or anything from the members' only portion of the website with others

The fact is, sharing materials risks the relationships we have with our vendors and may cause TVC to lose contracts. Rebates or discounts may go away. That's bad for business – for everyone.

What can happen if a TVC member violates the NDA? Here are a few examples:

- The vendor from which the information was disclosed may have a right to terminate the TVC contract. This will be a loss for all members. They may also seek legal remedies to be reimbursed for financial damages suffered.

- Immediate termination of the violating TVC member from TVC. Terminated members do not receive rebates.
- The terminated member and their clinic will be removed from access to all TVC programs losing all TVC vendor discounts.

The basis for the formation of TVC is to allow the small business to benefit as a larger organization in negotiating better pricing. If this negotiated price leaks, then the vendors will not want to work with TVC and eventually, TVC may dissolve, leaving the small business to flounder on their own with high prices.

NDA's are an important business tool used to further negotiations. TVC needs its members to abide by their NDA to ensure the success of TVC. Failure to abide by the NDA may result in termination from TVC. If you have any questions or concerns about this, please contact the TVC staff immediately. If you feel you may have unintentionally violated the NDA, please contact us so that we may resolve any problems regarding the violation.

A copy of the TVC NDA is available on the TVC members' only website section under the "My Members" section if you want to reread it. ■

RECURRING DIARRHEA?

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NEWS

Calling all TVC Members. This year we are forming multiple committees to help run the cooperative. Does TVC have all of the products and services on our program that you want to purchase at a discount or rebate? Does TVC have the right Vendors? Would you like to be a tester for new vendors to see if the products make sense for TVC? Do you want to have the chance to help **direct the future of TVC** and the vendors we choose? Do you want to **use your expertise** to help TVC make great decisions on future vendors?

What is in it for you?

- You will have the chance to see the most cutting edge products and services first and give it a try.
- You will have a chance to help form the best practice of the industry.
- You will be given free product as a tester.

We need your expertise on the Newly Forming TVC Product Committee!
Email Rich.Morris@tvc.coop our CEO if you would like to participate.

Webinars

All TVC webinars are live (mostly on the first Tuesday of the month) at 9:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. Central time. If you miss one, you can watch a recorded version a week later, but you will miss out on the incentive offered and the questions you can ask live.

Here is a preview of our upcoming webinars:

Tuesday, April 5: Bayer Webinar – Adding Choice to Flea and Tick Protection Offerings

Client and patient lifestyles are sometimes the biggest factors in recommending a flea and tick protection. Bayer's non-greasy, odorless Seresto collars repel fleas and ticks for 8 months, and are a perfect option for those patients whose skin is easily irritated, or for busy clients with young children or other pets who don't want the risk of accidental ingestion. Join TVC and Bayer Animal Health on April 5 at 9 a.m. or 1 p.m. (Central) for a webinar that will show you how to add Seresto to your flea and tick

protection offerings, and help augment revenue in the category without losing sales on other products. Dr. David Gosche will walk us through the science behind the Seresto collars, and you will be entered into a drawing for two chances to win an iPad mini per webinar session just for attending!

Tuesday, May 3: Nutraceuticals Webinar

Are Nutraceuticals part of your clinic's formulary? Learn from TVC Best Practice owners/members how these products can add to the health of your clients and your clinics bottom line.

Sign up for both webinars at www.tvc.coop/webinars

Promotions

Boehringer Ingelheim

GET A 25% DISCOUNT
ON SHORT-DATED VETMEDIN

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VETMEDIN 2.5 mg CHEWABLE TABLETS	
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Regular Price	\$40.50
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To learn more about this special offer or for more information on Vetmedin, contact your BVI sales representative, or call (866) 638-2226.

This offer good through April 30, 2016, while supplies last on lots expiring June 30 and July 31, 2016.

WedgeWood Pharmacy

Back – Order Alert!

WedgeWood Pharmacy may be able to compound preparations that are back-ordered by their manufacturers or otherwise unavailable so that your patients' treatment regimens are not interrupted.

Amikacin (as Sulfate) 250mg/ml Injection 2ml & 5ml	Famotidine 10mg/ml Injection Solution 20ml
Aminopentamide 0.5mg/ml Injection Solution 10ml	Flumethasone 0.5mg/ml 100ml Injection
Aminopentamide 0.2mg Tiny Tabs	Fluoxetine Quad tabs
Aminophylline 100mg Capsules	Guaifenesin 50mg/ml IV Injection in Bag or Bottle 500ml and 1000ml
Aminophylline 200mg Capsules	Ketoprofen 50mg Capsules, 50ct & 100ct
Ammonium Chloride 400mg Capsules 100ct	Ketoprofen 100mg/ml Aqueous Injection Solution 100ml
Ammonium Chloride Preservative-Free 5meq/ml Injection Solution	Lincomycin (as HCl) 100mg, 200mg and 500mg Capsules
Barium Sulfate 60% 950ml	Medetomidine HCl 1 mg/ml Injection Solution, 10ml
Betamethasone (as Valerate)/Gentamicin (as Sulfate)/Miconazole Nitrate 0.1%/0.15%/1.51% Otic Suspension	Reserpine 0.1mg & 0.25mg Capsules
Calcium Gluconate 10% Preservative Free Injection Solution 100ml	Reserpine 0.25mg Peppermint Flavored Medi-Mint Tablets 100ct
Chloramphenicol 1% 5gm Ophthalmic Ointment	Sodium Bicarbonate 50mg/ml (5%) 500ml Preservative-Free IV Injection in Bag or Bottle
Cimetidine 150mg/ml Injection 10ml and 30ml	Tolazoline (as HCl) 100mg/ml Aqueous Injection Solution 100ml Vials
Cisapride Formulations	Triamcinolone Acetnoide 0.015% Topical Spray
Clindamycin (as HCl) 25mg Tiny Tabs	Triamcinolone Acetonide 2mg/ml Injection Suspension 100ml
Diclofenac Sodium in Anhydrous Lipoderm 1% Topical Cream 60gm	Triamcinolone Acetonide 6mg/ml Injection Suspension 5ml, 25ml & 100ml
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Winning Them Over

**TVC Member/Owner
Tammy Stevenson says the
little things can pay big
dividends in earning the
flea/tick purchases from clients**

For some veterinary practices, the trail goes cold after the first visit. A client comes in, orders the bare minimum of flea/tick product, then vanishes until the next checkup, either falling behind on compliance, or going the retail route for flea/tick products.

TVC Member/Owner Tammy L. Stevenson, DVM, and the other veterinarians at Advanced Pet Care Clinic in Cedar Falls, Iowa, don't just make the routine recommendations for flea/tick. They track them.

"We set up our software system so when clients come in and they buy a single dose in a month, we send them a reminder that 'You're due for another dose,'" she says. "If they buy three month's worth, then they get a reminder in three months. If they buy a year's supply, then they get that reminder in 12 months."

The reminders are part of an overall strategy to eliminate the guesswork from customer interactions.

"We try to make it as easy as possible," says Stevenson. "We try and take a lot of the work that the client has to do away so we know things are getting done the way we want them done."





Friendly reminders

Every client that walks in the door is recommended Ceva's Vectra 3D for flea/tick treatment. The clinic offers a free first dose for puppies and kittens, and clients are even shown how to apply the product to their pet.

Flea/tick sales can seep through the cracks if practices aren't careful. Reasons may vary why a customer won't buy a six or twelve month supply of product. Whatever the case, Advanced Pet Care Clinic keeps in constant communication with clients.



Tammy L. Stevenson, DVM

Reminders come in the form of emails and texts. Often after the reminders are sent out, the clinic will get a phone call from the client. "We seem to get a lot of clients who get that email or text message and will call us and say 'Hey, I got this message or reminder for Vectra. What is that? Why am I getting this reminder?' Then we let them know when they bought a single dose, and we want them to use it every month to make sure their pet is not going to end up with fleas or ticks. Then those people come in and get doses."

It opens up a line of communication with clients, says Stevenson. "Once we explain it to them and they understand, then those clients are coming in and getting those next doses. They'll come in and buy three months at a time, or whatever is best for them."

Advanced Pet Care also helps customers with the rebate programs. Stevenson says they receive a lot of positive feedback from customers.

"I know a lot of clinics don't take the time to do that, but for us it's kind of a value-added service. They clients like it. When you send home rebates for clients to do, half the time they lose them or don't do them and they never get those free doses. We do it for them. We fill out the paperwork and send it in and print off an extra invoice and handle all of that for them."

Why veterinary-only matters

Of course, having the right product is just as important as having the right protocol. Advanced Pet Care Clinic has been using Ceva's Vectra 3D for six years, since the clinic opened, Stevenson says. Once clients are using it, the clinic doesn't receive a lot of follow up calls saying a pet has any fleas or ticks. Application is easy: Vectra 3D dries quicker than most flea/tick products. Stevenson also likes that that it's a topical and has a repellence as opposed to oral where the animal has to be bitten before it works.

On the business side, Ceva does a good job keeping Vectra 3D a veterinarian-only product. Vectra 3D's veterinary-distributed only model gives Advanced Pet Care Clinic a key selling point in a competitive marketplace. In fact, Stevenson says that when vendors come in with a product, one of the first things she looks for is whether the product is veterinary-distributed only.

"If you want me to carry it, it doesn't matter how good that product is, if a client can walk into any store in town – a Target or Walmart or Sam's Club – and see that product on the shelf, they're going to assume my price is higher than what they can get someplace else," Stevenson says. "Even when it's not, clients still make that assumption. So we try and avoid those products so I don't have to have that conversation."

Ceva does a good job of keeping a handle on the veterinary-distributed only model for Vectra 3D, Stevenson says. "I don't run into seeing their products everywhere like some of the other products on the market. That's huge for me."

Stevenson says her practice also does a lot of client education regarding over-the-counter products. "Usually I tell them they just don't work as well," she says. "I say that because I see animals coming in that are using over-the-counter products and the pets come in with fleas on them."



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Supports **SKIN REJUVENATION** with vitamin A, zinc and essential fatty acids





That's where difference in the marketing is for us. You can get some of these over-the-counter products really cheap, but you're getting what you pay for because you are coming in with a dog that has fleas."

Open lines

Advance Pet Care Clinic has also used social media as a difference-maker in marketing. At the front desk are cards with the clinic's social media accounts and contact information. Clients are encouraged to message the clinic via Facebook with any questions that may fall after hours.

"They can get a hold of us pretty much any time, and if they have questions at home, we tell them not to hesitate to call or email," Stevenson says. "I will let clients know, if you have a question at home and it's Friday at 8 p.m., send me a Facebook message. I get that information on my cell

phone. Normally I can message people back fairly quickly. They may have questions that they don't really want to call the emergency line for; they're just simple questions about a possible illness, or their dog ate something and they're wondering if they need to worry about it. Usually I get back within 20 minutes. Clients love that they can get a hold of me and they don't feel panicked."

Accessible

Indeed, accessibility is a great selling point for the clinic. Whether it's flea/tick reminders, rebates, product education or answering questions, Stevenson says her clinic emphasizes time with clients.

"We see it in reviews, they like the amount of time we spend with them," she says. "They don't feel hurried or rushed in the room. They got their questions answered." ■

Editor's note: Dr. Tammy L. Stevenson was one of the Best Practice members on the March revenue enhancing webinar. To learn more on how to make more profit and revenue while providing great pet health care, go to the TVC Members' only website and watch the March Webinar.

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How to Increase Your Professional Service Visits

Monthly billed wellness plans have been hot topics for several years now, and as the veterinary landscape evolves, the time for individual practices to recognize that these plans can be an incredible tool for growth is becoming increasingly important.

Corporate veterinary organizations have clearly identified the value that wellness plans afford. It's not just Banfield – VCA now offers wellness plans in almost all of their

practices, and a recent JAVMA article found that “National Veterinary Associates (NVA) ... has extended their wellness plan program to 129 of its practices, with more than 40,000 active plans ... NVA found that among clients who purchased wellness plans the number of professional service visits increased 67%, compared with the number of visits prior to the purchase of a wellness plan, from a mean of 3.3 visits per year to a mean of 5.5 visits/year.”¹



THINKING ABOUT WELLNESS

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Wellness plans are great for pets, pet owners and the practice. Higher compliance, education and the ability to pay monthly help pets and clients. Increased visits enhance loyalty and revenue for a healthy practice.

VCP has been helping veterinarians for years, and our wellness plan platform delivers the highest levels of flexibility, automation of billing and payment processing and client communication solutions.

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- Select from existing or create custom plans
- Comprehensive set of tools and features for easy management
- "How To" marketing and software training
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- Additional pet owner financial solutions available

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Fending off the competition, however, is only a tiny sliver of the value that wellness plans bring to the table for a veterinary hospital. What they are really about is an incredible opportunity for a veterinary hospital to practice a higher level of care for more pets, resulting in improved job satisfaction for the veterinarian and greater quality of life for the patients in our care. Add to that the amazing potential for practice growth in visits, active clients and revenue, and monthly billed wellness plans may seem like a “no brainer.”

But therein lays the conundrum, because for every practice that has implemented wellness plans with great success, there are many more that have attempted and failed. And the reasons for this failure are almost always a direct result of two very specific things: a lack of realization by leadership regarding the initial effort involved to get plans off the ground and not enough time building or re-building a practice culture around the value of preventive care.

So what does that mean for the practice that is committed to doing it and doing it right? Here are some recommendations:

No. 1: It takes a team

Implementing wellness plans is not a project for one person, regardless of who you are. The key is to build a project task force and provide them with guidance and direction, and then step back and let them do the work. Ideally there will be at least one person from every department on the task force, so they then earn the responsibility of being the cheerleader and trainer for their colleagues. This is an opportunity for motivated employees to shine and achieve valuable personal and professional experience. A team that believes in and is led by their peers is one of the most valuable assets a company can have. It takes more than one person to change a culture.

No. 2: Educate

Your team members are pet lovers, so the more they understand how wellness plans can improve and extend the lives of pets the less they will feel like they are “selling.” They should also be educated on the facts behind the research – that pet owners want education and a written plan from their veterinarian on what care their pets need, and that in a survey 46% of pet owners said that they would visit the veterinarian more frequently if a monthly payment plan was offered. Part of building a culture of wellness involves helping the staff understand that *pet owners already want wellness plans*.



So, while the staff member is explaining to clients the benefits and value of the wellness plans your practice offers, they can rest assured that 1 out of every 2 people is already “sold” when they start the conversation.

No. 3: Follow the K.I.S.S. Principle...Keep It Simple, Silly!

As you roll out your plans, and work to get the entire practice team on board, keep your plans as simple as possible. Base them on your practice’s protocols and aim for three plans per species – puppy/kitten, adult and advanced care (senior). Just add spay/neuter, microchip and dentistry as optional items and you are ready to go ... super simple, right? You can always get more creative once the plans become an integral part of your practice philosophy and culture – think breed specific, lifestyle, disease management, etc. But for now, KEEP IT SIMPLE.

No. 4: Tell the world

If you have made the commitment to offering wellness plans, then it’s time to reap the benefits. Your plans are only as valuable as the number of pets that are enrolled (a reasonable goal for success is to have 20% of active patients on plans within two years). Promote your plans internally with quality



Forty-six percent of pet owners said that they would visit the veterinarian more frequently if a monthly payment plan was offered.

brochures, banners and posters (posters in the exam room have shown to significantly increase wellness plan enrollment). Promote your plans externally via your website and social media. Practices report gaining new clients through “shared” posts of pets being highlighted as new practice wellness plan members. Many pet owners have no idea that such plans are available in private practices, and are eagerly leaving their current veterinarian to take advantage of these plans and the value they bring both in the ability to make monthly payments and to know that they are providing optimal care for their loved ones. Be creative in your promotion and get the word out quickly and confidently!

No. 5: Set goals and celebrate success

You need to know where you stand in order to generate continued enthusiasm for growth. Before offering wellness plans, what are your metrics for client retention, annual visits, specific service compliance and average annual spend

per species (wellness plan goals should ALWAYS include improving feline care!)? This means researching your starting point and tracking and sharing success (or failure) as you move forward. Build momentum and reach far, but within your grasp, so that everyone can recognize the part they play in making the initiative a success. Share, revise, celebrate and then do it again. And again!

Successfully launching wellness plans takes time, effort and solid teamwork. If those things are not available right now in your practice, then it is important to be realistic and admit that there are internal issues to manage before wellness plans can be done and done right. It is far better to hold off than to potentially have to go back and reattempt to gain team support and buy-in for something that didn't take off the first time. But, if you are in a position to launch wellness plans with rave reviews, there is no better time than the present to GO FOR IT! ■

Editor's note: TVC has found the best wellness programs in the industry. See the Members' only site to learn more about the programs TVC recommends with savings to your practice as well.

¹ How Wellness Plans Grow Veterinary Practice. John O. Volk and Gregory Hartmann, JAVMA, Vol. 247, No. 1, July 1, 2015.

Industry NEWS



Patterson Foundation elects Dave Misiak as new board president; announces 2015 total giving nearly \$1 million

At its December 2015 board meeting, the Patterson Foundation elected Dave Misiak, Patterson Dental U.S. president, as its new board president. The board recognized the hard work and dedication of outgoing board president Gary Johnson, who served seven years as president and is one of the founding members of the Patterson Foundation. Johnson will continue to serve on the board of directors as vice president. Dave Misiak, who has been with Patterson for more than 20 years, also previously served as a vice president on the Foundation board. “Gary has been a mentor to me and many others in the dental business. Watching his dedication as he focused on sustainability for the Foundation has inspired me to follow in his footsteps,” said Misiak. “Gary’s work has been a key to the Foundation’s success and longevity. For more than seven years, his leadership has helped the Foundation expand its reach. I’m honored to have been elected the new president and look forward to continuing the Foundation’s important work.”

Also at its board meeting, the Patterson Foundation elected to grant nearly \$195,000 to nonprofit organizations in the oral health and animal health fields, raising its annual total giving to more than \$980,000. More than \$365,000 of the donations made by the Foundation in 2015 were for scholarships awarded to dependents of Patterson Companies employees to pursue higher-education degrees. The remaining donations were in the form of grants to nonprofit organizations dedicated to providing dental care to those in need and assistance dogs to individuals with disabilities.

Top concerns of veterinarians listed

DVMNewsmagazine recently conducted a survey of veterinarians asking them what were the things that kept them up at night. The 10 responses, in order: 1. Rising costs and the affordability of veterinary care; 2. Competition from nontraditional service providers (big box retailers, online pharmacies and so on); 3. Client (non)compliance; 4. The cost of veterinary school, student debt; 5. Oversupply of veterinarians; 6. Dr. Google and other sources of misinformation; 7. Government regulations, fees and taxes; 8 (tie). Slippage of veterinarians’ strong reputation; 8 (tie). Corporate practices; 9. Maintaining wellness/preventive care for pets; 10 (tie). Poor abilities and attitudes of associate veterinarians (can’t handle clients, won’t charge, poorly trained, won’t work full-time, “When’s my time off?” lack of attention to detail and so on).

Scientists link second species of bacterium to Lyme disease

According to NPR, scientists believe they have discovered a second bacterium that can cause Lyme disease in humans. In 2013, during routine testing of bacterial DNA floating around in the blood samples of people suspected of having Lyme disease, researchers at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minn., realized they were looking at something different. “We detected this result which was positive, but it was clearly different from what we would have expected for *Borrelia burgdorferi*, which at that time was the only known cause of Lyme disease in the U.S.,” says Dr. Bobbi Pritt, a microbiologist at the Mayo Clinic. When they sequenced the genome of the bacterium, they realized it was different enough to be considered a new species. It’s been dubbed *Borrelia mayonii*, after the Mayo Clinic. News of the new species was published in the journal *The Lancet Infectious Diseases*.

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