

Press Release

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Time for Lyme, Inc. Awards Grant for Biofilm Research by University of New Haven's Lyme Disease Research Group

Group's Project Could Lead to Significant Advances in Diagnosis, Treatment of Lyme Disease

New Haven, CT – Dr. Eva Sapi, professor of cellular and molecular biology and director of the Lyme Disease Research Group at the University of New Haven (UNH), has been awarded a \$5,100 grant by Time for Lyme, Inc. to help complete the final steps in a project that could lead to significant improvements in the diagnosis and treatment of Lyme disease.

Previous research by Dr. Sapi and UNH's Lyme Disease Research Group has already shown that the bacteria that causes the disease, *Borrelia burgdorferi*, is capable of resisting antibiotic treatment by "hiding" in a self-made protective layer called biofilm. This discovery could explain why some people infected with Lyme disease continue to have symptoms even after treatment with traditional antibiotic therapy.

According to a report previously released by Sapi and the UNH researchers, "While conventional antibiotic therapy is usually effective against free-floating bacteria, it is frequently ineffective once pathogens have formed biofilms, because biofilm colonies can be up to 1,000 times more resistant to antibiotics."

This latest project is aimed at understanding the molecular mechanisms taking place during biofilm development, in order to be better able to prevent and destroy it. Without the protection of the biofilm, the hope is that diagnostic tests and antibiotic treatments for Lyme disease can be made much more effective.

The results of the study are expected to be published later this year.

Time for Lyme, Inc., a Connecticut-based organization dedicated to funding and promoting research about Lyme and other tick-borne diseases, awarded the grant so that the Lyme Disease Research Group could purchase a specialized computer to analyze their lab results.

Through funds raised through donations and fundraisers, Time for Lyme awards about \$300,000 in grants annually to research projects focused on Lyme disease and other tick-borne diseases. To make a donation or to view grant application guidelines, visit www.timeforlyme.org.

Time for Lyme, Inc. is a Connecticut-based 501(c)3 non-profit organization dedicated to funding and promoting research about Lyme Disease and other tick-borne diseases, with a primary focus on accelerating the development of more effective methods of diagnosis and treatment of Lyme Disease. Time for Lyme has raised over \$5 million since its founding in 1998 to fund research on Lyme and other tick-borne diseases at esteemed institutions across the U.S., including the establishment and endowment of the Columbia University Medical Center's Lyme and Tick-borne Disease Research Center. Time for Lyme has also reached thousands of people in Connecticut and beyond with Lyme and tick-borne disease educational materials and support groups. For more information call 203-969-1333 or visit www.timeforlyme.org

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