Munchausen by Proxy Syndrome

Parents of children who are seriously ill with Lyme or any other disease need to navigate a host of complex medical situations. Problems may arise when state, school, or other authorities involved with the child have insufficient or inaccurate information about the problems associated with the diagnosis and treatment of diseases, especially one with multiple symptoms like Lyme and tick borne diseases. Some parents and professionals are not familiar with the existence of more than one standard of care, which allows for a clinical diagnosis, the use of a variety of diagnostic methods, and differing treatment protocols.

Because of these misunderstandings, parents sometimes find themselves involved with child protection agencies or school districts filing inappropriate charges of child abuse, neglect or even accusing the parents of Munchausens by Proxy.

To assist parents in addressing the false allegations and getting their children the help they need, the following documents may be helpful.

1. Dr. Virginia Sherr published an article discussing Munchausens by Proxy. PubMed Link to abstract, click here. ILADS Link, click here.


3. Dr. James Schaller published an updated symptom checklist for Lyme disease which is very extensive and fully documented with references. Click here.

4. Dr. Robert Bransfield published an article, stating in part: "Late stage Lyme disease has been erroneously diagnosed as psychosomatic, hypochondriasis, malingering, factitious disorder, Munchausen’s syndrome by proxy, Somatoform disorder, hysteria, and conversion disorder." Link to article, click here.

5. Dr. Joseph Burrascano's 'Advanced Topics in Lyme Disease', click here.

6. LymeInfo has an extensive 'Medical Literature' section that documents symptoms and provides references. Click here.

7. The national Lyme Disease Association provides parents with a number of helpful articles concerning children and Lyme disease. Click here.

8. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) states on its website that patients can have symptoms that last months to years, even after treatment, and dub the condition "Post-treatment Lyme Disease Syndrome".
**Quote:** Approximately 10-20% of patients with Lyme disease have symptoms that last months to years after treatment with antibiotics. These symptoms can include muscle and joint pains, cognitive defects, sleep disturbance, or fatigue. The cause of these symptoms is not known, but there is no evidence that these symptoms are due to ongoing infection with *B. burgdorferi*. This condition is referred to as **Post-treatment Lyme disease syndrome (PTLDS)**. Click [here](#) for more information.

9. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) also states the symptoms Lyme patients experience, even after what is thought to be "adequate treatment", are real. Quote: "If your family and friends can't provide the support you need, talk with a counselor who can help you find ways of managing your life during this difficult time. As with any illness, Lyme disease can affect you and your loved ones. It doesn't mean that your symptoms are not real. It means that you are a human being who needs extra support in a time of need." Click [here](#) for more information.

10. You may want to have your child tested for Epstein Barr Virus and Parvo B-19 virus. One, or both, have a chance of reading positive in someone with chronic Lyme disease, which provides the parents with more medical documentation of an illness. You may also want to test for additional tick borne diseases. See a list of the various know tick borne diseases and basic information about them [here](#).

11. Another fact to consider- The term Munchausens by Proxy is not officially recognised in the latest Diagnostic and Statistical Manual, 4th Ed., published by the American Psychiatric Association. Click [here](#).

12. Dr. Ann Corson discusses the difficulty with evaluation, diagnosing, and treatment of Lyme and tick borne diseases in children, including a discussion concerning symptoms. Article by Scott Forsgren, click [here](#).

13. M.A.M.A. (Mothers Against Munchausens Allegations) has a website that may be of help. Click [here](#).

14. A very detailed article, 'False and Highly Questionable Accusations of Munchausen Syndrome by Proxy', by Dr. Helen Hayward-Brown can be found [here](#).

15. Article- 'Munchausens by Proxy Accusations in Children With Mitochondrial Disease'. Click [here](#) to read article and view slide program.

16. The article "Munchausen Syndrome by Proxy' (A.N. Cowling) has a list at the end of the article describing possible signs of a Munchausen by Proxy offender. Click [here](#).

17. 'Munchausen: Unusual Suspects' is a magazine article published in Psychology Today- click [here](#).