

Myths and Misconceptions

Lyme disease and its link to Autism

- ❖ **All kids with Autism have Lyme disease – FALSE-** A subset a children on the autism spectrum also have active Borreliosis, we don't know how large of a subset this is, we do know from informal studies that it is AT LEAST 20-30% which would be over 200,000 children in the United States alone. Clinicians are reporting numbers ranging from 20% all the way to 90% of the children with autism testing positive for Borrelia. We have a research study underway with the Utah State Center for the Persons With Disabilities and hope to have results soon. It is important to note that if a child has Borrelia/Lyme, this does **not** mean that vaccines did not play some sort of role in their illness as a possible trigger for this infection. For non-vaccinated children, this may shed some light as to why they also have autism.
- ❖ **You must have a tick bite in order to contract Lyme disease – FALSE-** Congenital transmission is most likely the cause for these children. Other transmission methods exist such as mosquitoes, fleas, bed bugs and sexual transmission (which is a concern for parents transmitting to each other). Technically a child who was born with Borrelia has a syndrome known as Borreliosis (a chronic form).
- ❖ **Our doctor can create a treatment protocol for my child to address this infection.**
TRUE and FALSE – A doctor who is trained in Lyme disease and/or Tick Borne Diseases and Autism Spectrum Disorder should see your child. If he/she does not have special training then you need to find someone who does.
- ❖ **My child tests negative for Lyme disease, so he must not have it.**
TRUE AND FALSE- Children with a family history for auto-immune disorders, genetic predispositions to neurotoxins may be subject to a false negative result. Please see our testing information for the list of reasons why a person may test negative when they are in fact positive. In addition it is important to mention that the CDC states that a Lyme disease diagnosis is a clinical one and testing is to be used as a guideline not as the sole determination of the diagnosis.
- ❖ **Antibiotics are harmful.** **TRUE and FALSE-** Just as no two patients appear to be affected by the Borrelia bacteria in the same way, a patient's response to antibiotic therapy is highly individual. The individual nature of an antibiotic's effect on a patient is believed to be due in part to the theory that different strains of the bacteria react differently to each antibiotic. For a child with autism, so much can be happening that if you don't address detoxification pathways, the child may regress on antibiotics. However, for some of the kids, antibiotics are their lifeline and they must have them in order to improve. This decision is to be left up to the physician and parent alike who can weigh the risks to the benefits to determine an appropriate treatment protocol.

This page is for educational purposes only and does not represent a diagnosis or recommendation of any kind. Please see a physician knowledgeable in autism spectrum disorder and Lyme disease/ Borreliosis for more information.

