**Shining a Light on Perinatal Transmission of Lyme Disease**

Dear Reader, March 4, 2023

I’m sharing this new compilation and analysis of research with you on the topic of Perinatal Transmission of Lyme disease. This includes detailed descriptions from the primary literature identifying cases of congenital and/or placental infection with *Borrelia burgdorferi* in humans as well as findings from animal studies, epidemiologic studies and much more. I’ve also included direct quotes in gold/yellow boxes at the beginning of each section, from subject matter experts related to maternal-fetal transmission of Lyme disease and/or adverse outcomes from peer-reviewed, published articles. This is a work in progress and will be regularly updated as new research findings come available.

I also want to your attention a report which was written for the Clinical Presentation and Pathogenesis Subcommittee for the 2022 US Tickborne Disease Working Group. I was honored to receive an invitation to participate as a member of this subcommittee, and our report includes an extensive section (Priority 4) on Lyme disease and Pregnancy including research gaps and opportunities. The report [can be found here](https://www.hhs.gov/ash/advisory-committees/tickbornedisease/reports/clinical-presentation-pathogenesis-2022/index.html).

In 2022, myself and several co-chairs/organizers who participated in the [Banbury meeting on Perinatal Transmission of Lyme disease,](https://www.cshl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Banbury_LYME22_Web-Agenda.pdf) participated in a panel discussion for the Cohen Foundation LymeMIND conference in a panel titled: The Value Partnerships: A multi-disciplinary Approach to Addressing Perinatal Transmission of Lyme disease. I invite you to watch this session which is [available here](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z95GgrCkCoE&list=PLI7jXV0gfRtdUqxgzitW767q09ohu5P7S&index=3) includes a powerful video with stories of families impacted by congenital Lyme disease along with several experts sharing on the subject matter.

I am so thankful for all my incredible colleagues who helped me find important papers and information along the way, especially Maggie S, Joanna C, and Michael M, this was certainly a team effort! I am forever grateful to our extraordinary pediatrician, Dr. Charles Ray Jones who specialized in pediatric Lyme disease, and sadly passed away in 2022. His expert care of tens of thousands of children from around the world exemplified clinical excellence, courage, resilience, and kindness. He taught me that courage is contagious, healing is possible, and learning is life-long. I thank God for giving me the strength and endurance to keep going in an area rife with so much unnecessary controversy and marginalization – this IS changing!

For families that have been impacted by this alternate mode of transmission, I see you, I hear you and I care so deeply, because I too walk in your shoes. Keep going and don’t give up. Each day is a new beginning. These [beautiful lyrics and song](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NfknrqmtRLw) by [JJ Heller ‘Hold On’](https://youtu.be/NfknrqmtRLw) sum up the words I would share with you, if I were to meet you over a cup of tea.

*‘Hold on, Hold on, I know you’ve been fighting so long*

*Stay strong, stay strong, It’s the darkest before the dawn, Hold on’*

I believe that collaborative, multi-sectoral research will open new doors for better diagnostics, treatment, healthcare professional education and resources, policy tools and ultimately support and medical care for families and children impacted by perinatal transmission of Lyme disease. There is a path forward, a light has been turned on and these issues are being now being seen, heard, amplified and actioned– and I’m excited about the momentum now and in the future.

Warmly and *with hope*,

Sue Faber RN, BScN

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****[www.lymehope.ca](http://www.lymehope.ca)