

# Lyme In Vermont's Children

Many children in Vermont are at high risk for contracting Lyme disease. According to the CDC, the highest infection rates occur in children, ages 5 to 9. Of the 300,000 people infected in the U.S. each year, one in four is a child.

Separate from symptoms such as joint pain and fever, children may have a unique presentation of Lyme disease, including:

- • Mood Swings
- • Vision Problems
- • Headaches and Stomachaches
- • Hyperactivity/ADHD Symptoms
- • Autism-like Behaviors
- • Oppositional Behaviors
- • Self-Mutilating Behaviors
- • Learning Disabilities
- • Trouble with Processing Speed and Memory
- • Vocal/Motor Tics
- • Sudden Onset Anxiety Disorders
- • Light and Sound Sensitivity
- • Difficulty Focusing
- • Obsessive Compulsive Behaviors
- • Dark circles under eyes
- • Irregular Rashes
- • Lethargy

*"Some of these symptoms may be very subtle, so it is difficult for [parents and] teachers to realize that they are dealing with a sick child, rather than a child who is daydreaming, or simply trying to avoid his school work."*

—S. Berenbaum, LCSW

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# What You Should Know

## Sometimes neurological or cognitive symptoms are the only symptoms of a Lyme infection

Other times symptoms like joint pain, fever, and an erythema migrans ("Bulls-Eye") rash are present.

## Pediatric Lyme disease can cause behavior problems

Pediatric Lyme disease has been misdiagnosed as OCD, ADD, or pediatric Bi-polar disorder. It can also cause Depression. When a child exhibits sudden changes in behavior with no known cause, the possibility of Lyme and other tick-borne infections should be considered.

## Lyme disease symptoms can be vague, and change daily

Some children with tick-borne disease have been accused of malingering, or trying to manipulate parents, coaches or teachers. Children who have symptoms that appear to be disingenuous may be genuinely ill.

## Sometimes there's no rash

The Vermont Department of Health's 2014 Lyme Surveillance Report showed less than half of Vermont children with a confirmed case of Lyme disease had a "Bulls-Eye" rash.



*Different Rashes Caused by Tick-borne Diseases*