<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/mothers-may-pass-lyme-disease-to-children-in-the-womb/>

Mothers May Pass Lyme Disease to Children in the Womb

Doctors treating Lyme see evidence that pregnant women can transmit the disease to their children. But public health experts say the science isn't so clear

Scientists have long suspected that the spiral-shaped Lyme bacteria, Borrelia burgoferi, can be passed gestationally, since other "spirochetes" – most notably the syphilis bacteria – are known to be transmitted in the womb, causing a range of birth defects.

Justine Donnelly's medical journey began the day that her mother's 30-year quest to solve her own health mystery ended….

It's a controversial claim: While U.S. public health authorities recommend that pregnant women who have Lyme disease be treated with antibiotics, they do not believe that science has demonstrated that the bacteria can be transmitted to a developing fetus. And yet a number of health practitioners who specialize in Lyme disease say that they've seen evidence that gestational transmission is occurring.

Few recent studies have investigated the issue of gestational infection by Lyme disease – a crucial gap as this difficult-to-diagnose disease spreads and more families like Donnelly's learn that their lives have been transformed by a long-hidden disease.

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