

News & Observer Sep 29, 2008 08:03 AM - Raleigh

## Film documents medical conflict

### Lyme activists seek better treatments



Denise Faggart, left, of Concord, says she spent \$50,000 on long-term antibiotic treatments for her daughter Kalyn, right, after Kalyn contracted Lyme disease.

Staff Photo by John Rottet



Dr. Joseph Jemsek now practices in South Carolina.

#### **ABOUT LYME DISEASE**

Lyme disease was first identified in the 1970s in Connecticut after a group of children were sickened by deer tick bites.

The incidence of Lyme disease has grown nationally, and the number of actual cases may outnumber the number of reported cases. Though more than 1,000 cases have been reported in North Carolina, epidemiologists say the disease was likely contracted in another state.

Lyme can be treated successfully with oral antibiotics if it's caught early, usually after someone notices a red

circle around a tick bite and symptoms such as fever, headache and fatigue.

More controversial is how to treat more advanced Lyme. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends a second course of oral antibiotics when symptoms persist, but not long-term antibiotic treatments.

A small group of doctors who think that some of their patients suffer from a chronic Lyme infection use intravenous antibiotics for extended periods, a practice that national medical groups have called dangerous and irresponsible, despite claims of successful treatments.

CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION, N.C. LYME DISEASE FOUNDATION

#### **ON THE WEB**

To learn more about the film, visit [www.underourskin.com](http://www.underourskin.com).

Proponents for greater recognition of Lyme disease have created a Web site for people in the Carolinas who think they might have the disease: Carolinalyme.org

For the official perspective on Lyme, visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: [www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/Lyme/index.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/Lyme/index.htm)