

Thoughts from a Munchausen by proxy survivor

I was raised by a mother with Munchausen's, MBP, and narcissistic personality disorder. As an infant, she claimed I needed penicillin for "months" until I got anaphylaxis. Throughout my childhood, she had me at the pediatrician nonstop for pneumonia, and would force cold medicine down my throat, and wake me up in the middle of the night or take me out of school for increasingly complex regimens of antibiotics. She would also sleep in my room at night in case I stopped breathing and died. Once I was taken out of bed and brought to the pediatrician where I was given two shots of adrenaline. To this day, I wake up with panic attacks when I have a cold.

She took me to an allergist for painful testing and claimed I was allergic to our pets. And to Children's Hospital, where she claims I was diagnosed with asthma. My father -- her ride-or-die enabler who completely believes her and will never say a word against her -- says she "pressured the doctor into saying (I) had asthma." From then on, I was also given steroids and inhalers that would make me shake, make my heart race, and give me palpitations.

By the time I was about 8 or 10, I started to develop severe burns and yeast infections in my mouth and throat from all the antibiotics, and once I retched so hard from cough medicine that my nose opened up like a faucet with blood. There was debate about having to cauterize it to make it stop.

I do not know if she tampered with my medications or did anything deliberate to make me sick, or if her telling me how ill I was plus all the medications would produce the symptoms. I do know that if she ever found a doctor who wouldn't give her her way, she would denounce them loudly and move onto one she could push around more easily.

Once I grew up, she transferred her behaviors onto her pets (she tried to get her most recent dog put down because it had a broken foot) and back to classic Munchausen's--very notably when she is feeling like she isn't the center of attention. This has included a bout of bipolar depression because I "went away to college," sudden-onset pneumonia at my grandmother's funeral, and an ongoing slew of unexplained falls/dementia/strokes/concussions triggered by the birth of my daughter.

Suffice it to say, I do not have any of the illnesses or allergies she claimed. I do, however, have issues with anxiety and PTSD.