

## **Health Impact News**

# **Medical Kidnapping Children in the United States: Maine**

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# Maine



# Child with Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome taken from Loving Family by Doctors



The Ross Family. Photo from [Reunite the Ross Family Facebook Page](#).

## Health Impact News Editor Comments

The fact that Medical Kidnappings have become so common is now reaching the mainstream media, who are beginning to investigate stories in their local communities. This report comes to us from WMTW 8 in Maine.

In this report, reporter Katie Thompson interviews the parents of 2-month old Ryder Ross, who was taken away

from his family when they brought him into the emergency room because his leg was swollen. X-rays allegedly revealed multiple fractures in various stages of healing throughout Ryder's body.

Doctors reported them to Child Protection Services (DHHS in Maine) for child abuse, and they lost custody.

However, blood work showed vitamin D and calcium deficiencies in the baby, and a doctor at Boston Medical Center diagnosed the baby with Ehlers-Danlos syndrome, which doctors say is not all that rare.

*“Somewhere around one in five-thousand individuals probably have this disorder and its significantly under diagnosed,” said Dr. Jeff Milunsky, with the Center for Human Genetics in Cambridge, Massachusetts.*

The couple is still fighting to get their child back, however, as the father has been charged with criminal charges of child abuse.

## **Couple hopes diagnosis will reunite family, end child abuse allegations**

### **Ehlers-Danlos syndrome mimics signs of abuse**



WMTW8 ABC. [Click to watch video.](#)

by [Katie Thompson](#)

Excerpts:

BATH, Maine —A family broken apart by allegations of child abuse could be brought back together again because of the diagnosis of a not-so-rare condition that every parent should know about.

It has been more than five months since Brandon Ross, 25, of Bath, last saw his 2-month-old son, Ryder. He is allowed supervised visits with his 2-year-old daughter, Rosalynn. Ross and his wife, Cynthia, have had their parenting rights suspended, and they are now fighting for their right to be together.

The situation started when Brandon and Cynthia Ross brought their infant son to the hospital. “My wife noticed that his leg was swollen and so we were just curious because its not normal for babies to have a swollen leg,” said Brandon Ross.

X-rays revealed multiple fractures in various stages of healing throughout Ryder's body. Doctors told the couple they were being investigated for child abuse.

"We met with our DHHS caseworker, and she said that the department was seeking custody of our children and that we wouldn't be leaving the hospital with them," said Cynthia Ross.

Two months later, there were still no answers.

"They'd done some blood work that showed some weird vitamin D and calcium levels in the hospital, and we were hopeful that somebody would be able to figure out what caused it," said Cynthia Ross.

Then on June 12, a grand jury indicted Brandon on 12 counts of abuse and was arrested by Bath police. His face was plastered in the newspapers and on television. "I was just floored I was like we still have all of this medical stuff going on I mean I know there is no way," said Brandon Ross.

"We're just normal people who were concerned about our children," said Cynthia Ross.

Cynthia began researching, eventually getting an appointment with a doctor at Boston Medical Center. "He touched Ryder's skin and checked his flexibility in a couple of joints, and he was like, 'This is Ehlers-Danlos syndrome,'" said Cynthia Ross.

Ehlers-Danlos syndrome is a systemic, genetic connective tissue disorder. "Somewhere around one in five-thousand individuals probably have this disorder and its significantly under diagnosed," said Dr. Jeff Milunsky, with the Center for

Human Genetics in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Milunsky studies and evaluates EDS. He did not evaluate Ryder, but sees similar patients from around the world. "A patient can present from newborn with fractures bruising dislocations hip dislocation," said Milunsky.

The Ross family was given a new report. One doctor wrote, "It is in my opinion extremely likely that during the birthing process, and, or, with normal handling that Ryder could have fractured his rib cage. The same is true for other fractures."

Another doctor called the fractures "characteristic of those that can occur in fragile bones and not inflicted injury."

However, the case against Brandon Ross was not dropped. The preliminary hospital reported dated in April described Ryder's fractures as "most consistent with non-accidental inflicted trauma, ie. child abuse."

Experts said this wouldn't be the first time doctors missed the signs of the genetic disorder. "Families are unjustly accused of child abuse who have multiple fractures in their children that are medically explained," said Wilson.

Wilson travels the country defending and helping hundreds of families fighting for their innocence and their children. His research has also uncovered unsettling correlations.

"There's about 10 to 15 percent of the EDS population that's been adopted. Most of them tell me I was adopted because I was supposedly abused. Now, when I sit back and look at it I think was that parent really abusing that child? I don't think so," said Wilson.



[Read the full article and watch the video here.](#)

The family has a Facebook Page: [Reunite the Ross Family](#)

# Medical Kidnapping in Maine: Child with Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome & Sister Seized - Grandfather Commits Suicide



Cynthia Ross with Ryder and Rosalynn. Image supplied by family.

**UPDATE 10/29/2015**

From the [Reunite the Ross Family Facebook Page](#):

*For those of you that have been waiting for an update, here it is:*

*18 months after we took Ryder to his doctor with concerns over his swollen leg, 16 months after my husbands name was*

wrongfully tarnished, 12 months after a highly anticipated trip to a world renowned specialist in Boston, 11 months after we shared our story with the state of Maine, 7 months after we told the world our story on 20/20, and after countless tears and prayers ROZALYNN AND RYDER ARE HOME FOREVER! We are so thankful for this journey, for all we have learned, for those who have helped us through, for those who have tirelessly cared for our children, supervised visits, attended numerous meetings and appointments, and spent hours in uplifting conversations. Thank you!

*“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.”*

*Jeremiah 29:11-13*

## UPDATE 7/8/2015

From the [Reunite the Ross Family Facebook Page](#):

*The State of Maine continues to pour more salt on the wound. We had hoped that the case would be dismissed as Brandon’s criminal attorney has not been given copies of the new x-rays which show at least one new fracture.*

*Please continue to pray, share, and tell everyone you know about our plight. GOD BLESS YOU ALL!!!*



[WMTW Story here.](#)

UPDATE 6/26/2015

WMTW-TV in Maine did an update on the Ross family after our report:

## [Lawyer wants new X-rays as part of abuse defense](#)

by **Health Impact News/MedicalKidnap.com** staff

In November, we shared a story with you regarding a two-month old baby boy by the name of Ryder Ross who was allegedly kidnapped from his parents due to a genetic connective tissue disorder called Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome. (See: [Child with Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome taken from Loving Family by Doctors.](#)) Ryder is now fifteen months old and is still in the state's custody.

Brandon and Cynthia Ross became concerned after noticing

their baby's leg was swollen. Even though Ryder was not crying excessively, had no bruises, red marks, or any outward signs of injury other than the swelling, the couple took him to the doctor for an examination.

After performing some x-rays and finding the infant with multiple fractures throughout his body, the doctors sent the family to the Maine Medical Center (MMC) for further evaluation. Before the couple understood the depths of the evaluation, they were deemed guilty of child abuse by officials at MMC.

Six days after Ryder was admitted to the hospital, the state of Maine chose to remove both Ryder and his two-year-old sister Rosalynn from their parents' care.

## **Inconclusive Test Results**



Ryan Ross. Image supplied by family.

Numerous x-rays and tests continued to be administered. Ryder's family listened to doctors admit their tests were inconclusive, that there were different probabilities and possibilities, but there were no concrete findings. For example, one test showed Ryder had multiple fractures, yet another test revealed no fractures at all. Blood tests showed alarming vitamin D and calcium levels.

Several weeks passed before a doctor from MMC reportedly admitted abnormal vitamin D and calcium levels in Ryder's blood could quite possibly be linked to a medical condition that may have caused the injuries. However, after meeting with other members of his team, the doctor allegedly dismissed that idea.

Follow-up testing was performed only after demands from Ross and Cynthia were made.

The state deemed the parents guilty of child abuse regardless of the inconsistencies in their testing results and placed the infant in foster care.

## **Arrested Without Proof of Guilt**



Brandon Ross with Ryder and Rosalynn. Image supplied by family.

On June 12, 2014 Brandon, a twenty-five year old father, was indicted on twelve counts of child abuse and was arrested by Bath, Maine police. After being transported to the local jail, he received death threats from other inmates. The threats

were taken so seriously that the jail provided Brandon with private accommodations for his safety.

## **Baby's Grandfather Commits Suicide Due to Mental Anguish Caused By State**

On Father's Day of 2014, just days after Brandon's arrest, after telling the family he believed the state was out to get Brandon, Ryder's seventy-four year old grandfather committed suicide, after writing a note falsely claiming responsibility for Ryder's injuries.

In October of 2014, the true cause of the baby's fractures was finally discovered. The little guy suffered from Ehlers Danlos Syndrome (EDS). He, his mother, and his grandmother were diagnosed by Dr. Michael Holick at the Boston University Medical Center. Some of the symptoms of the various forms of EDS include calcium and vitamin D issues and more importantly, fractures.

## **State's "Experts" Disagree With Medical Findings From Outside Their Sphere Of Influence**

Ryder recently fell when running and sustained yet another fracture, while in the state's custody. Dr. Lawrence R. Ricci, M.D., of the Spurwink Child Abuse Program stated this on a Medical Evaluation form dated 05/12/2015

*"This fracture in no way alters my opinion that the initial constellation of injuries was abusive. This is also taking into account the prior expert witness reports offered by the parents, both about rickets and Ehlers-Danlos syndrome, neither of which do I find in any way convincing... I would*



*note that there is no literature that I am aware of where Ehler's-Danlos syndrome has been described as causing any fractures in infancy, much less fractures that are quite characteristic of child abuse."*

When we shared this story in November of 2014, Dr. Jeff Milunsky with the Center for Human Genetics in Cambridge, Massachusetts, who sees patients with Ehler's-Danlos Syndrome from around the world, was quoted as saying, "A patient can present from newborn with fractures, dislocations, hip dislocations..."

A skeletal survey was performed on May 11, 2015 and the Ross family was able to view the survey on May 12th in the child abuse pediatrician's office. Cynthia said,

*"Along with the buckle wrist fracture, Dr. Ricci pointed out a left-clavicle fracture that was completely healed. I pointed out that this fracture did not exist previously, and he told me that he was quite sure that it had. My husband and I also noticed very clear signs of metabolic bone disease in Ryder's x-rays."*

Currently, Cynthia is allowed to have supervised therapeutic visits with her children twice per week. She is also allowed to pick the children up from daycare on Friday evenings and keep them under monitored supervision at her grandmother's house until Monday mornings arrive. Brandon is allowed to join them under direct supervision of either Cynthia's mother or grandmother from 8 am until 8 pm on Saturdays and Sundays.

[20/20 picked up Ryder's story](#). On the same day [ABC](#) posted

their press release, the Ross family received a phone call from their attorney stating that the DHHS (Department of Health and Human Services) had requested a permanency hearing. The state wanted to terminate Brandon and Cynthia's rights, but there was no evidence. Now, DHHS is apparently trying a different approach.

On August 6th, a settlement conference has been scheduled, where the state is hopeful that an agreement can be reached on the permanent placement of Ryder and Rosalynn. The state had given the Ross family a deadline of July 2nd to submit any evidence they have, however medical records from the skeletal surveys taken on May 11th have still not been released to the parents or to their experts. The Ross family's attorneys plan to ask for an extension, but there are no guarantees that the extension will be granted. If an agreement is not reached on August 6th, a permanency hearing will be held between the dates of September 23rd and September 25th.

## **Elected Public Officials Refuse To Help**



Cynthia and Brandon Ross. Photo supplied by family.

Cynthia has contacted several public officials, just to be told that they “do not get involved in court matters.” Paul LePage, however, sent her a handwritten note saying he would personally review the Ross family’s case file. She knows he did review the files, but she has not heard

anything back from him or anyone else on the matter for quite some time. Cynthia said, "I ended up calling the governor's office and Pat Condon, the constituent coordinator for Governor LePage, she told me that the governor cannot help me, he could not talk to me now or ever concerning this or any other matter."

Brandon and Cynthia are hopeful that they can prove no abuse ever occurred and that they will have the opportunity to regain custody of both of their children. In a previous statement, Cynthia said:

*"We're just normal people who were concerned about our children."*



*Photo By Jim Bowdoin*

Maine Governor Paul LePage.

[Governor LePage can be reached here.](#) (207-287-3531 Toll-free: 1-855-721-5203)

Support this family by visiting the [Reunite the Ross Family Facebook Page:](#)

# Ehlers Danlos Syndrome Awareness

## Why the Zebra?



Reunite the Ross Family  
Community to medical students through

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# Wrongly Accused Dad in Maine is Pardoned for False Shaken Baby Conviction



Brandon and Cynthia Ross with their two children shortly after the birth of their baby, Ryder.

## Health Impact News Staff

A nightmare that no family would ever want to endure began back in 2014 when Brandon and Cynthia Ross brought their baby to the doctor because his leg was swollen. We [published their story](#) on MedicalKidnap.com:

*Brandon and Cynthia Ross became concerned after noticing*

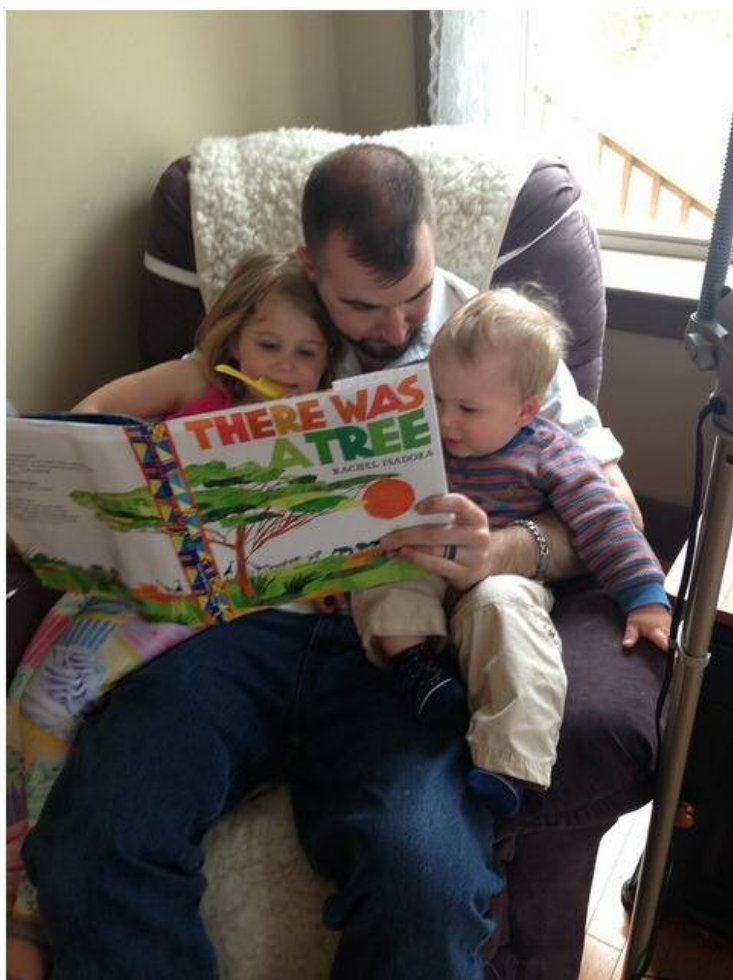
*their baby's leg was swollen. Even though Ryder was not crying excessively, had no bruises, red marks, or any outward signs of injury other than the swelling, the couple took him to the doctor for an examination.*

*After performing some x-rays and finding the infant with multiple fractures throughout his body, the doctors sent the family to the Maine Medical Center (MMC) for further evaluation. Before the couple understood the depths of the evaluation, they were deemed guilty of child abuse by officials at MMC.*

*Six days after Ryder was admitted to the hospital, the state of Maine chose to remove both Ryder and his two-year-old sister Rosalynn from their parents' care.*

However, blood work showed vitamin D and calcium deficiencies in the baby, and a doctor at Boston Medical Center diagnosed the baby with Ehlers-Danlos syndrome, which doctors say is not all that rare.





Brandon Ross with his two children.

Unfortunately, Brandon, the father, was arrested on child abuse charges:

*Then on June 12, a grand jury indicted Brandon on 12 counts*

*of abuse and was arrested by Bath police. His face was plastered in the newspapers and on television. “I was just floored I was like we still have all of this medical stuff going on I mean I know there is no way,” said Brandon Ross.*

*“We’re just normal people who were concerned about our children,” said Cynthia Ross. ([Source.](#))*

Tragically, Brandon’s father, the grandfather of the baby, committed suicide due to the mental anguish he suffered from seeing his son falsely accused and arrested:

*On Father’s Day of 2014, just days after Brandon’s arrest, after telling the family he believed the state was out to get Brandon, Ryder’s seventy-four year old grandfather committed suicide, after writing a note falsely claiming responsibility for Ryder’s injuries.*

*In October of 2014, the true cause of the baby’s fractures was finally discovered. The little guy suffered from Ehlers Danlos Syndrome (EDS). He, his mother, and his grandmother were diagnosed by Dr. Michael Holick at the Boston University Medical Center. Some of the symptoms of the various forms of EDS include calcium and vitamin D issues and more importantly, fractures. ([Source.](#))*



Brandon and Cynthia Ross.

In October of 2015, Cynthia posted the joyful news on their [Facebook Page](#) that the children were finally back home:

*For those of you that have been waiting for an update, here it is:*

*18 months after we took Ryder to his doctor with concerns over his swollen leg, 16 months after my husbands name was wrongfully tarnished, 12 months after a highly anticipated*

*trip to a world renowned specialist in Boston, 11 months after we shared our story with the state of Maine, 7 months after we told the world our story on 20/20, and after countless tears and prayers ROZALYNN AND RYDER ARE HOME FOREVER!*

*We are so thankful for this journey, for all we have learned, for those who have helped us through, for those who have tirelessly cared for our children, supervised visits, attended numerous meetings and appointments, and spent hours in uplifting conversations. Thank you!*

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*Jeremiah 29:11-13*

However, Brandon’s name was still not cleared of the false charges. He took a plea deal by pleading “no contest” to two misdemeanor charges to get the case closed so their two children could come home back in 2015.

A few days ago (February, 2019), [WMTW of Portland Maine](#) reported that former Maine Governor Paul LePage pardoned Brandon Ross on Dec. 31, 2018. The Rosses just received the letter notifying them of the pardon last week.

*A Maine father has been pardoned nearly five years after being accused of abusing his infant son.*

*Brandon Ross had said a medical condition called Ehlers-Danlos syndrome was the cause of his son's injuries. It is a genetic condition that causes bones to be abnormally susceptible to fractures.*

*Former Gov. Paul LePage pardoned Ross on Dec. 31, 2018. Ross had petitioned the governor for clemency.*

*The Rosses received notice of the pardon this week.*

Read the full story and watch the video at [WMTW](#).