



The Family Hope Center

An International Center for the Development of Children

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What are Epileptic Seizures and Convulsions?

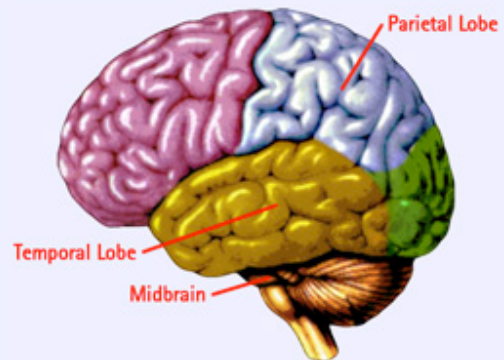
Dr. Temple Fay, a brilliant neurologist and neurosurgeon, wrote in a paper entitled “The Other Side of a Fit” (American Journal of Psychiatry, 1942), that a seizure is a ‘defense mechanism’ designed to help us, not hurt us. When we have an unbalanced metabolism, or lack adequate oxygen in the brain, a seizure helps us resolve the problem. Just as a fever is a signpost to an infectious illness and is designed by nature to help ‘burn off’ the infection, a seizure is a signpost to a neurological problem in the brain and is designed by nature to bring us to a balanced state.

Seizures can come in response to a variety of different conditions in the brain. They begin primarily in the cortex – often the parietal and temporal lobes. But children with cortical symptoms often also have mild to severe problems in the midbrain area. This area of the brain is responsible for processing and integrating the vast amount of sensory information being sent to the brain at any given time, and then for directing this information to the cortex. If this area is not functioning well, even an uninjured cortex will have difficulty performing its sophisticated tasks.

As a result, children who suffer from seizures often experience developmental delays in a variety of areas, in addition to the seizures themselves. For example, such children may have difficulty with reading, writing and other language skills, and with social conduct. They may also have problems with convergence, depth perception, coordination and mobility. These difficulties and problems are generally additional symptoms of the same underlying problems that the seizures and convulsions are reactions to.

Brain impairments associated with Epilepsy

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How Can We Help?

Just as a full response to a fever (which, again, is a signpost of an illness in the body) is not limited to administering anti-fever medication, we should not suppose that anti-seizure medication, in and of itself, is solving the problems the seizures are responding to. Even if medications reduce the frequency and severity of a child's seizures, are we really solving the problem, or just avoiding the need to get to the root of the problem?

In some cases, children come to us taking two or even three anti-convulsant medications. Sometimes, but not always, the medications do reduce the seizing. In the meantime, however, these children are losing their ability to function intellectually, physically and socially. We *know* that there is a better solution.

It is critical, in order to help these children, to take a comprehensive approach; that is, to directly treat the neurological and other problems that are creating the need for the seizures/convulsions, while simultaneously dealing with the seizures/convulsions themselves. In truth, these are two essential parts of the same path to healing. This is what we offer at The Family Hope Center.

What Do We Do for these Children?

When we see children who suffer from seizures/convulsions, we look first for their *underlying causes* – that is, the problems the seizures are reacting to. This can be a complicated process: chronic hypoxia (insufficient oxygen to the brain), poor digestion and intestinal absorption, poor metabolism/unbalanced biochemistry in the gut and brain, poor cranial blood flow, fever caused by an illness, poor diet, and organ toxicity are just some of these underlying causes.

We begin with a thorough neurological evaluation to determine the precise location, nature and extent of the individual child's injury. We then develop a comprehensive sensory, educational, social and motor program that is targeted directly to the specific areas of the brain that have been injured. As mentioned above, this usually means both parts of the midbrain and higher cortical levels.

Simultaneously, we meticulously evaluate the child's metabolic function. We look for toxins, absorption problems, allergies, mineral and vitamin insufficiencies, hormonal imbalances, hypoxia, and cranial blood flow problems. We look to detoxify, support purify and strengthen and finally balance the organs and endocrine systems.

Finally, and critically, we address the overall metabolic, neurological and physical health of the child in several important ways, including:

- We dramatically increase oxygen delivery to the whole brain. This contributes greatly to the overall health and development of the brain, which both facilitates and accelerates the healing process.
- We work to ensure that the cranial sacral mechanism is functioning up to its maximum potential. Without addressing this important aspect in healing the child, the progress will be much, much slower.
- Since progress toward wellness depends *heavily* on an excellent, cleansing diet, we develop individually designed diets to increase neurotransmitter function in the brain, restore gastrointestinal health, and eliminate over-sensitivities to allergens and toxins.
- When appropriate, an individualized, home-based neurofeedback program is developed to further enhance the child's progress.

We fully expect children following treatment plans like these to make steady progress on the full range of issues that cause both their seizing and any related developmental problems. Our goal is not only to help eliminate seizure activity, but to help the child improve intellectually and socially in all ways.