

A Seizure Disordered Child

I saw eight year old Alex two months after a tonic-clonic seizure. His EEG was abnormal and his doctors' prognosis was a 50-70% chance of the seizure recurring.

The seizure was characterized by involuntary and uncontrollable up and down movements of the mandible. Alex was conscious but not really aware of what was happening. There was no post ictal confusion.

The seizure took place on a particularly hot day in May. Alex is a hot kid (3) who sweats profusely and does not do particularly well in the heat. The previous summer he suffered from heat stroke. He was comfortable swimming in the coldest water and slept without covers even in winter.

He had difficulty falling asleep (3), and was greatly aggravated by lack of sleep (3). He talked (2), walked (five times) and grinds his teeth in his sleep. He had enuresis until six years old. Due to his fear of the dark (3), Alex slept with the light on.

His appetite was good but picky, desiring sweets (3), meat (3), fat on meat (2) and salt. He was averse to fish and other fats (mayonnaise and butter). There was no tendency to constipation or diarrhea. Alex's mother described him as an intense child. He had intense worries, nightmares, was very neat (3), arranging his clothes for the upcoming week, and very clean.

His temper was unpredictable. While for the most part a very polite, composed child, when provoked, Alex would go into a rage, yelling, hitting and throwing things. Much of his anger was directed at his younger brother, of whom he was intensely jealous.

Alex's fears were of the dark (3), crowds (3) (he refused to go to malls), and dogs (3). His mother distinctly remembered that at four years old he was knocked over by a large charging dog about the time of his brother's birth. It was at that time that the rages and fears began.

Other characteristics include: intelligent, averse to tight collars, myopic, and mannerisms - repeatedly touching his nose, and on occasion, stuttering.

Plan:

Follow-up at one month:

No seizures. He did have two days of temper tantrums after reluctantly taking the remedy. Alex did not like being talked about and was suspicious that the remedy would change something integral to him.

Since then there was only one tantrum - after being accidentally hit with a baseball bat. The rage was short and easily checked. He was a little better in a crowded store.

Follow-up at two months:

No seizures. No tantrums. The mannerisms were much decreased. He was more social at school. The fears were improving as well. There were no nightmares.