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Just Diagnosed With a Visually Impaired Child

By Patty Hone

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Finding out that your child is blind, partially blind, or has low vision can be a scary experience. Some disorders will be discovered at birth, if the vision impairment has observable characteristics such as cataracts or congenital glaucoma, but many go undetected until the child doesn't meet certain visual milestones. Parents may start to notice that their child does not seem to make eye contact or track bright high contrast items. Children with profound vision loss will often have nystagmus. Nystagmus is an observable condition where the eyes tend to shift back and forth rapidly, giving the appearance of jiggling eyes. There are a few children that are born with normal vision and develop vision loss due to accidents, brain tumors, or severe illnesses. Generally if your child is not meeting typical vision milestones by around three or four months your pediatrician will refer your child to an ophthalmologist. Proper diagnosis cannot be made without a thorough exam from an ophthalmologist.

Visual Acuity

Visual Acuity may not be determined until your child is older. When doing an exam on an infant, ophthalmologists often use visual acuity cards. Basically these are large posters of black and white lines. Infants see high contrast, black and white items the best. The cards will start off with very thick black lines and each card will have gradually thinner black lines. The thicker the line, the easier it is for an infant to see. By observing how your infant tracks these cards, your ophthalmologist can determine more about your infant's visual acuity.

Dealing with the shock

There is no easy way to deal with finding out your child is blind or has a significant vision issue. Usually the diagnosis comes as a shock. Even if you are aware that there is a problem, actually hearing the words that your child may be blind or partially blind is emotionally crushing. Talking to others parents going through the same thing will help some. Educating yourself on the subject matter will also help. Not knowing what to expect is one of the most difficult aspects of having a vision

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impaired child. With most conditions your ophthalmologist can't give you a perfect idea of how well your child will be able to see in the future. Once your child starts being able to communicate well, you will have a better idea of the severity of your child's condition.

Coping with family members and friends

Not only do parents have to deal with their own emotions but also they have to handle the reaction of their family and friends. Sometimes family members can say things to make the situation worse, questioning your prenatal care, dismissing the problem as not as severe as you are telling them, or giving you unwanted advice. You may hear things like "well you can just get him glasses", or "you know they have surgeries for that". Even as you try to educate them on the subject, often times they have their own beliefs. Sometimes it is best to keep the discussions to a minimum if they are not supportive or helpful to you.

What to do next

Once you receive your diagnosis, you may be wondering what you can do. Talk to your pediatrician about getting services with a vision therapist. This is often available through Early Intervention programs. Ask your pediatrician whom to contact for more information on this. Read as much as you can on the subject. Knowledge about your child's vision condition will make you feel less helpless. Find a support group. If you can't find one locally, you can find one online. There are many support groups available for specific vision disorders.

Helpful links:

Albinism– NOAH

The National Organization for Albinism and Hypopigmentation

Nystagmus – American Nystagmus Network

Optic Nerve Hypoplasia/ Septo Optic Dysplasia – Focus Families

Retinopathy of Prematurely

The Association for Retinopathy of
Prematurity and Related Diseases

Strabismus

Blindness and low vision

National Association for Parents of Children with Visual Impairments

Patty Hone is the mom of a visually impaired child. She is also the owner of

pregnancy and parenting message boards for moms. Please visit Justmommies message board for Visually Impaired Children for more support for parenting a visually impaired child.

Getting Away With Mild Cerebral Palsy

By Low Jeremy

CP is commonly known as cerebral palsy. This is a condition that is caused by disorders in the motor ability of the child which causes him to act unnaturally and move differently. Cerebral palsy is a serious disorder or injury; however, there is also a form of mild cerebral palsy.

This is mild compared to cerebral palsy. There are a lot of causes that contribute to mild cerebral palsy. Some of the causes are the same as that of cerebral palsy only that, the damages are not that severe. A child with mild cerebral palsy can respond to some actions and situations while a child with severe cerebral palsy may be hard to deal with and they cannot talk at all.

A mild cerebral palsy enables the child to talk and answer back but not too perfect. Scientist has said that there are about thousands of children and infants are diagnosed of mild cerebral palsy. Another thousand of it are diagnosed of severe cerebral palsy. A child with mild cerebral palsy may still have the chance to be cured with series of treatments and physical therapy sessions.

However, it will not take a short time to aim perfect and natural conditions because the neuromuscular system of the child is damages which might require special critical treatments. A child with mild cerebral palsy can still be able to learn things because some of the reflexes are not damaged and are still active.

A child with mild cerebral palsy might even be cured naturally in the years to come but it is however unpredictable. Parents should be very attentive and caring if their child has mild cerebral palsy so that it can be treated. A child's motor ability is not that affected with mild cerebral palsy and is somehow expected to change dramatically if the child is eager.

Nowadays, researchers and scientists are trying their very best to come up with successful treatments to treat children who are diagnosed of mild cerebral palsy. More and more therapies have been enhanced and studied to fully achieve their goals.

If you have a child who has mild cerebral palsy, do not give up on them because they still have the chance to be cured. All you have to do is to keep them healthy by giving them the right food, getting them into treatment and therapy programs that will enhance their muscular ability and try to teach them as if they were natural healthy children.

This content is provided by Low Jeremy. It may be used only in its entirety with all links included. For more information on cerebral palsy, what causes it & where to get advice, please visit

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