



## Epilepsy Parents Ask...

# 腦癇症家長有疑問

Text | Stephanie Wong

### Parent asks:

My son had a seizure after running a high fever. Does it mean he has epilepsy?

我兒子在一次高燒後發生了一次身體抽搐，這表示他已患有腦癇症嗎？

### Stephanie says:

Seizures that are triggered due to a huge spike in body temperature are called “febrile seizures.” These seizures are more common in young children and infants.

To witness your child having a “febrile seizure” can be a frightening experience for parents as the child might experience twitching, stiffening of muscles, rolling of eyes, etc., but having a febrile seizure does not mean that your son has epilepsy.

Epilepsy is the tendency to have recurrent seizures and they are not related to running a high fever. But if you are worried about your son’s febrile seizure, you should seek your doctor’s advice.

因體溫的大幅度升高引發的突然發作稱為「熱痙攣」（俗稱發燒抽筋）。這種突然發作常見於幼兒和嬰兒。

見到孩子發燒抽筋，父母當然會害怕。因為他們可能會出現抽搐、肌肉發硬、眼睛來回轉動等情況。然而，有過一次發燒抽筋並不表示他們患有腦癇症，因為腦癇症與高燒無關。如果你對孩子的發燒抽筋感到憂慮，你應該尋求醫生的建議。



### Stephanie Wong

As the Senior Social Worker of Enlighten-Action for Epilepsy, Stephanie Wong has extensive experience counseling people living with epilepsy. She has worked with a lot of children and youth, as well as parents and caregivers of those affected by epilepsy.

資深社工，現服務於專為腦癇症患者提供服務的香港啟迪會，8年多來一直為兒童、受影響的家長及關心腦癇症的人士提供專業的諮詢。



### **Parent asks:**

Recently I noticed that my young daughter looks blank and doesn't respond for few seconds, but soon after she is perfectly fine. Is there something wrong with her, should I take her to see a doctor?

最近我發現我年幼的女兒會突然呆視，像失去知覺幾秒鐘，但很快就完全沒事了。她身體會有甚麼問題嗎？我應該帶她去看醫生嗎？

### **Stephanie says:**

When epilepsy and seizures are mentioned, most people think of the typical convulsive seizures (tonic-clonic seizures), where the person's body stiffens, fall to the ground and convulse.

But indeed, there are more than 40 different kinds of seizures with "absence seizure" being one of them. Absence seizures are a sudden lapse of consciousness, a loss of awareness (just for few seconds) and the person looks spaced out. Since they happen so subtly and so quickly, most people do not notice the seizures, and the person having the seizure is not aware and does not remember due to the momentary loss of consciousness. These seizures are also called Petit mal. Unfortunately, this seizure is not easy to recognise and is usually overlooked. Many parents or teachers think the child is day-dreaming, and are surprised to know that the child was having a seizure.

I suggest that you speak with her teachers to know if they also noticed your daughter blanking out. This will help you have a better idea of how often and how long the blanking out lasts, in case it is a seizure.

It might also be beneficial for you to keep track of the time and duration. If possible, take a short video with your phone. All these information is always helpful to neurologists and doctors.

許多人將腦癇症歸為全腦性強直陣攣式腦癇（或稱大發作），即出現身體發硬、倒在地上、抽搐等情況。

其實現時世界上有40種不同的腦癇，「失神」是其中一種。患者會有呆視，像失去知覺幾秒鐘，因為這些症狀是快速發生的，所以很難被注意到。這種突然發作也被稱為「小發作」，由於是短暫失去意識，連孩子自己也不會意識到，而許多父母或老師會誤以為孩子在做白日夢，所以當他們被診斷出患有腦癇症時他們會感到驚訝。

我建議你應該向老師詢問上學期間，孩子發生這種狀況的頻率和持續時間，這些資料是非常重要的。可能的話，更可用手機將發作的情況拍攝下來。這些資訊都有助腦科醫生更準確分析孩子的病情。

### **What is epilepsy?**

Epilepsy is a common neurological (brain) disorder that affects people of all ages, and both sexes around the world.

Epilepsy is basically defined as the tendency to have recurrent seizures i.e. where someone has been medically diagnosed as having two or more seizures.

A seizure is caused by abnormal excessive electric discharges leading to a sudden burst of excess electrical activity in the brain, causing a temporary disruption in the normal message between brain cells. This disruption results in the brain's messages becoming halted or mixed up.

### **甚麼是腦癇症？**

腦癇症是一種普遍的腦神經紊亂病症，它可以發生於任何年齡、性別的人士身上，而且此症已影響了全世界很多人。腦癇症是指患者有重複和自發性的腦癇傾向，即在醫學上診斷為有起碼兩次或以上的腦癇發作。而腦癇發作是指當腦神經細胞異常放電，導致短暫大腦神經功能紊亂，大腦資訊傳遞出現混淆或終止。

**Parent asks:**

My four year old son was recently diagnosed with epilepsy. It is frightening for him and us when he has a tonic-clonic seizure. What should I do?

我四歲的兒子最近被診斷為腦癇症。當他一出現強直陣攣性發作，我們和他都很害怕。我應該做些甚麼呢？



**Stephanie says:**

The tonic-clonic seizure includes two phases: Tonic Phase and Clonic Phase. The seizure usually begins with the child making a loud cry, then the body stiffens (tonic phase), the child loses consciousness and falls down. Then the clonic phase takes over and his arms and legs will begin to jerk rapidly. Slowly, he regains his consciousness and awareness, but feels very drowsy and tired.

Witnessing a tonic-clonic seizure can be a frightening and difficult experience. Most parents we speak to are besieged by a feeling of helplessness. The best thing you can do is for both you and your son to get a better understanding about epilepsy and be aware of the steps of “seizure first-aid.”

全腦性強直陣攣式腦癇（大發作）分為兩個階段。孩子首先會大聲哭喊，然後身體發硬，失去知覺，然後倒地。接著，他們會發生陣攣。他們的四肢會開始快速顫動。慢慢地，他們會重新恢復意識，並感到昏昏欲睡和疲倦。

目睹孩子全腦性強直陣攣式腦癇（大發作）是令父母感到驚嚇和難過的事情，他們亦通常感到無助。作為父母，你們最好能夠對腦癇症有充分了解，認識腦癇發作的急救步驟。

**Always:**

- Stay calm and note the time (to know the duration of the seizure);
- Check for difficulties in breathing and loosen any tight neckwear;
- Cushion the head with something soft;
- Gently lay him on his side in the recovery (semi-prone) position.

**你應該：**

- 保持冷靜並記錄下腦癇症發作持續時間；
- 檢查呼吸是否困難，解開任何緊身的領帶、圍巾之類；
- 用柔軟的東西將頭部墊起來；
- 將患者轉身至復原臥式的姿勢（側臥）。

### Never:

- Try to restrain/stop the seizure as it may cause injury. Many mums believe that a tight hug could stop the seizure. But in fact it may injure him. Please wait for the seizure to run its course.
- Put anything in his mouth.
- Give him anything to eat or drink immediately after a seizure. He may feel sick and unable to swallow properly.

### 你絕不應該：

- 許多父母可能會不知所措，以為將孩子緊緊抱住可以停止孩子的腦癇發作，這樣做可能會傷害到他們，建議讓發作順其自然發生，絕不要強行制止抽搐。
- 把東西放進他的嘴裡。
- 出現腦癇後，孩子可能會感到不舒服，且不能順利吞嚥。因此，不要讓他馬上吃或喝任何東西。

If your son has already started school, you should communicate with his teachers regarding your son's condition. This is important to ensure your son's safety as he might have seizures at school.

你應該將孩子的情況告訴老師，以確保他在學校發作時的安全。

### Supplied by: Enlighten-Action for Epilepsy

Enlighten-Action for Epilepsy strongly believe that ignorance breeds fear leading to misunderstandings. Hence they offer free training courses, information booklets and first-aid posters to the general public, as well as to schools in Hong Kong to raise epilepsy awareness. They also have easy-to-read children's books on epilepsy to help you explain about epilepsy to your children. Please do not hesitate to contact them for any information that you may need.

知識的匱乏只會帶來恐懼和誤解，所以啟迪會致力想公眾、學校提供免費課程、資訊及宣傳海報，以增加大家對腦癇症的認識，當中更包括適合兒童閱讀的簡易版書籍。如你需要有關協助，敬請與他們聯繫。

\* [www.enlightenhk.org](http://www.enlightenhk.org)

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### Causes of Epilepsy

Epilepsy can happen to anyone at any age! Unfortunately in most cases, there is no known cause for the seizures (idiopathic epilepsy), but some of the known causes are:

- Brain damage during birth due to birth trauma, lack of oxygen or infection.
- Infectious diseases such as meningitis (infection of the covering of the brain and the spinal fluid), encephalitis (infection of the brain), and other malarial and tuberculous infections.
- Benign or malignant tumours.
- Scarred brain tissue resulting from a severe head injury or trauma.
- Genetic conditions such as tuberous sclerosis that might cause non-malignant brain tumors.
- Strokes.
- Alcohol and drug abuse.
- Consumption of food infested with tapeworm eggs (cysticercosis) is a cause of epilepsy in some parts of Asia.

### 腦癇症產生的原因

任何年齡都有可能患上腦癇症。而大部份患者的發作是成因不明，不過一些已知的原因包括：

- 因產傷、缺氧或者感染導致的初生嬰兒腦部損傷。
- 傳染病，例如腦膜動脈炎（腦部和脊椎液的覆蓋物的感染）、腦炎（腦部感染）及瘧疾和結核感染。
- 良性或惡性腫瘤。
- 腦部受傷或精神創傷導致的腦部組織受損。
- 遺傳因素，例如結節性腦硬化可能造成非惡性腦瘤。
- 中風。
- 酒精和藥物濫用。
- 食用寄生了條蟲卵的食物（豬囊蟲病），在亞洲部分地區有部分案例。

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