



CHILDHOOD DISINTEGRATIVE DISORDER

(OR)

HELLER'S SYNDROME

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ABSTRACT

Heller's syndrome is a disorder during childhood that is disintegrative. Heller's syndrome is also called as disintegrative psychosis or childhood disintegrative disorder. Children who have attained the age of two years often lose skills such as, Loss of play, motor, Social, thinking (cognitive), language, or skills like self-help like feeding and toilet training. It is a Devastating Condition Of Unknown Cause. About half the children diagnosed with CDD have an abnormal electroencephalogram (EEG). EEGs measure the electrical activity in the brain generated by nerve transmission (brain waves). Most treatment is behavior-based and highly structured. Educating the parents is also emphasized in overall treatment plan. Speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, social skills development, and sensory integration therapy may all be used according to the needs of the individual child.

Key words:

Heller's syndrome, Psychosis, EEG, Occupational therapy

INTRODUCTION

Childhood Disintegrative Disorder (CDD), Or Heller's Syndrome, Is A Rare Pervasive Developmental Disorder (PDD) Which Involves Regression Of Developmental Ability In Language, Social Function And Motor Skills. It Is A Devastating Condition Of Unknown Cause.

CAUSES

All of the causes of childhood disintegrative disorder are still unknown. Sometimes childhood disintegrative disorder surfaces abruptly within days or weeks, while in other cases it develops over a longer period of time. A Mayo Clinic Report Indicates, The Occurrence Of Epilepsy Is Higher In Children With Childhood Disintegrative Disorder.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

A Child Affected With Childhood Disintegrative Disorder Shows Normal Development, Up Until this Point, The Child Has Developed Normally In The Areas Of Language Skills, Social Skills, Comprehension Skills, And Has Maintained Those Skills For About 2 Years. Between The Ages Of 2 And 10, Skills Acquired Are Lost Almost Completely In At Least Two Of The Following Six Functional Areas:

- Expressive Language Skills (Being Able To Produce Speech And Communicate A Message)
- Receptive Language Skills (Comprehension Of Language - Listening and Understanding What Is Communicated)
- Social Skills And Self Care Skills, Control Over Bowel And Bladder, Play Skills, Motor Skills
- Lack Of Normal Function Or Impairment Also Occurs In At Least Two Of The Following Three Areas: Social Interaction, Communication, Repetitive Behavior And Interest Patterns.

DIAGNOSTIC STUDIES

Assessment tests performed may include some or all of the following:

- ✓ **Full Medical History Examination** - Extensive Interview Assessing When Developmental Milestones Were Reached, And The Age At Which Previously Acquired Skills Were Lost
- ✓ **Neurological Examination** - To Assess Any Abnormalities In The Individual's Brain Or Nervous System
- ✓ **Genetic Tests** - Any Inherited Family Conditions Or Diseases
- ✓ **Communication And Language Tests**
- ✓ **Lead Screening** - To Assess For Lead Poisoning As This Can Damage The Nervous System And Lead To Developmental Delays Or Behavioural Problems
- ✓ **Vision Test**
- ✓ **Behaviour Inventory** - Occurrence Of Specific Behaviours, For Example Repetitive Movements, Or Social Interaction And Play Skills
- ✓ **Developmental Tests** - Performed To Assess How The Child's Skills Compare To Other Children Of The Same Age
- ✓ **Hearing Test**
- ✓ Play Skills, Self-Care Skills, Cognitive Skills
- ✓ Tests Which Assess: Large Motor Skills, Fine Motor Skills, Sensory Skills

MANAGEMENT

Treatment Of CDD Involves Both Behavior Therapy, Environmental Therapy And Medications.

Behavior Therapy: Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) Is Considered To Be The Most Effective Form Of Treatment For Autism Spectrum Disorders By The American Academy Of Pediatrics.

Goal:

The Primary Goal Of ABA Is To Improve Quality Of Life, And Independence By Teaching Adaptive Behaviors To Children With Autism, And To Diminish Problematic Behaviors Like Running Away From Home, Or Self-Injury By Using Positive Or Negative Reinforcement To Encourage Or Discourage Behaviors Over-Time.

Environmental Therapy: Sensory Enrichment Therapy Uses Enrichment Of The Sensory Experience To Improve Symptoms In Autism, Many Of Which Are Common To CDD.

MEDICATION:.

Medications: There Are No Medications Available To Directly Treat CDD. Antipsychotics, Stimulants And Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitors are Sometimes Used In Expert Hands To Help In The Control Of Problematic Behaviour, Particularly Aggression. Anticonvulsant Medications Are Used To Control Seizures

PROGNOSIS

- Risk Of Seizures Increases Throughout Childhood, Peaking At Adolescence, And Seizure Threshold May Be Lowered By Neuroleptics. Outlook Is Poor. Children Will Require Lifelong Support. Child family need support from other family members. Suggestion and helpful encouragement can be attained from families having victims of Childhood disintegrative disorder. Support groups have been initiated by some communities to consult parents whose kids have this disorder.

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