

Child's Laughing Fits Turned Out to be Serious Signs of a Brain Mass

Doctors perform new surgery to destroy lesion, cure boy's "giggling epilepsy"

UCLA Mattel Children's Hospital

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NEWS PACKAGE



SUGGESTED TEASE	ALL PARENTS LOVE TO HEAR THE SOUND OF THEIR CHILDREN LAUGHING, BUT FOR ONE FAMILY IT WAS A SIGN OF SERIOUS TROUBLE. THE CONDITION THAT THREATENED THIS YOUNG BOY AND THE SURGEON WHO CURED HIM, NEXT IN HEALTH NEWS.
ANCHOR LEAD	THERE ARE FEW THINGS PARENTS LOVE TO HEAR MORE THAN THE SOUND OF THEIR CHILDREN LAUGHING. BUT IN RARE CASES, IT CAN BE THE SIGN OF A SERIOUS MEDICAL PROBLEM. A CONDITION KNOWN AS "GIGGLING EPILEPSY" CAUSES CHILDREN TO CHUCKLE UNCONTROLLABLY, BUT IT'S NO LAUGHING MATTER. CLARK POWELL SHOWS US WHAT CAUSES THESE LAUGHING FITS AND A NEW MINIMALLY INVASIVE SURGERY TO CURE THEM.
(PACKAGE START) -----	
CG: Courtesy: UCLA Mattel Children's Hospital :00 - :03	(Nats - family playing game together) :02
Shots of family playing game	ROBERT CHO SAYS HIS SON, JUSTIN, HAS ALWAYS BEEN A HAPPY CHILD. :03
Shots of Justin laughing	(Nats of Justin laughing while playing game) :01
CG: Robert Cho Justin's dad	SO HE NEVER GAVE IT MUCH THOUGHT WHEN JUSTIN WOULD LAUGH - EVEN THOUGH AT TIMES, FOR NO APPARENT REASON. :05 <i>"Ever since he was an infant, he would giggle every now and then and it would be very short-lived, anywhere from 2 to 5 seconds." :07</i>
Shot of family at table	BUT AFTER JUSTIN SUFFERED A CLASSIC EPILEPTIC SEIZURE AT HOME, HOSPITAL TESTS REVEALED THAT <u>THIS</u> LAUGH - :07
Video from hospital testing	(Nats - Justin laughing during hospital stay) :01
Video of Justin in hospital	WAS THE SYMPTOM OF A SERIOUS PROBLEM. :02
CG: Aria Fallah, MD	

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<p>UCLA Mattel Children’s Hospital</p> <p>Shot of images of a brain</p> <p>Shot of Chos coming in for exam</p> <p>Shots of Dr. Fallah with Justin</p> <p>Close up of Justin’s scalp</p> <p>Shots of high-tech imaging</p>	<p><i>“These are episodes out of the blue where a child may laugh but it’s really a seizure.” :08</i></p> <p>KNOWN AS GELASTIC EPILEPSY, THE SEIZURES ARE CAUSED BY A BENIGN MASS OR LESION DEEP INSIDE THE BRAIN.</p> <p>IN THE PAST, CURING IT MEANT OPEN-BRAIN SURGERY THAT CARRIES HIGH RISKS AND REQUIRES A LONG RECOVERY.</p> <p>BUT AT UCLA, SURGEONS TAKE ANOTHER APPROACH.</p> <p>HERE THEY MAKE A TINY INCISION IN THE SKULL, AND USING SOPHISTICATED GPS-LIKE MAPPING, THEY INSERT A TINY LASER FIBER DIRECTLY INTO THE PROBLEM AREA. :26</p>
<p>Dr. Fallah (CG’d earlier)</p> <p>Shots of Justin playing soccer</p> <p>Shots of family playing game</p>	<p><i>“And we essentially cook it with thermal energy. So, we’re cooking this lesion from the inside out and that cures the epilepsy.” :08</i></p> <p>AND THE FACT THAT IT’S A MINIMALLY INVASIVE PROCEDURE MEANT JUSTIN COULD GET BACK TO HIS NORMAL ACTIVITIES, LIKE PLAYING SOCCER, ALMOST IMMEDIATELY.</p> <p>NOW, WHENEVER HIS FAMILY HEARS HIM LAUGH, THEY KNOW HE’S HAPPY - BECAUSE THE EPILEPSY IS GONE. :13</p>
<p>Robert Cho (CG’d earlier)</p> <p>Shot of family at table</p> <p>(PACKAGE END) -----</p>	<p><i>“Nothing. Zero. No gelastic seizure. No full-on seizure. It’s a miracle.” :11</i></p> <p>AT UCLA MATTEL CHILDREN’S HOSPITAL, THIS IS CLARK POWELL REPORTING. :03</p>
<p>ANCHOR TAG</p>	<p>THOUGH THESE MASSES OR LESIONS ARE MOSTLY BENIGN, DOCTORS SAY THEY DON’T RESPOND TO MEDICATION, SO SURGERY IS THE ONLY CHANCE AT CURING THEM.</p> <p>IF LEFT UNTREATED, THIS TYPE OF EPILEPSY CAN LEAD TO SERIOUS SEIZURES, AS WELL AS LEARNING AND MEMORY PROBLEMS, PREMATURE PUBERTY AND EVEN EARLY DEATH.</p>

SOCIAL MEDIA

<p> Share it! Suggested tweet:</p>	<p>One boy’s giggling fits were no laughing matter. See how neurosurgeons @MCHUCLA cured him. http://bit.ly/2l8yi70</p>
<p> Suggested post:</p>	<p>Parents love to hear the sound of their child’s laughter, but for one family, it was a sign of a serious medical issue. Meet a boy who suffered from a rare case of “giggling</p>

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epilepsy” and see how neurosurgeons at [UCLA Mattel Children’s Hospital](http://www.uclamattelchildrenshospital.org) were able to cure him.
<http://bit.ly/2l8yi70>

EXTRA BITES

CG: Aria Fallah, MD
UCLA Mattel Children’s Hospital

Fallah talks about consequences of patients going untreated:
“These are quite serious episodes, and if they go untreated, they can also affect cognition and IQ and learning.”

Fallah talks about the position of these masses or lesions:
“Hypothalamic hamartoma, really the complexities of treating this disorder have to do with the location of where the lesion is. You really couldn’t find a more challenging spot in the human body to place a lesion.”

Fallah describes the minimally-invasive procedure:
“We trim just a little bit of the child’s hair. We place a single, small incision and make a 2-millimeter hole in the skull where we pass this laser fiber directly to the center of this lesion.”

Fallah talks about the effectiveness of the procedure:
“The last seizure they usually ever have is the seizure they have right before surgery, because they wake up and the seizures are completely gone, and other than that, they’re completely the same child.”

Fallah says children recover quickly from these procedures:
“We send them home the next day with an absorbable stitch and a small Band Aid, and they can go back to playing and being themselves right away, essentially the day of the operation.”

Cho says his son is naturally happy, so diagnosis was hard:
“Well Justin has always been a very happy child. He’s been very energetic, very athletic.”

Cho says Justin would giggle mostly when he was tired:
“We always thought that it was sign for him to tell us, somehow, his body somehow was telling us it’s time for him to go to sleep.”

CG: Robert Cho
Justin’s dad

Cho says Justin’s giggling would occur often at night:
“He would also giggle in the middle of the night anywhere from 12 midnight to, let’s say, 5 in the morning while he’s sleeping.”

Cho says after two seizures, his son admitted there were more:
“The scary part of it all is that my son tells me he’s had more than two seizures. We just never knew about it.”

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