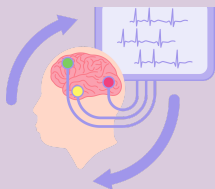


INFANTILE SPASMS

A “can’t miss” diagnosis that is too often missed.
A Quick Reference for Healthcare Providers.



What Are Infantile Spasms?

- A rare, catastrophic epilepsy syndrome occurring in infants. Classified as an epileptic encephalopathy.
- Also called West Syndrome or
- Characterized by brief seizures (spasms), developmental regression, and an abnormal EEG pattern (hypsarrhythmia).

RECOGNIZING THE SIGNS

Typical Presentation:

- Age of onset: 3–12 months (peak 4–7 months).
- Spasms: sudden flexion, extension, or mixed movements of the neck, trunk, and limbs.
- Clusters: occur in groups, often upon waking.
- Duration: each spasm lasts 1–2 seconds.
- Frequency: clusters may occur dozens of times daily.

Associated Features:

- Developmental regression or arrest.
- Poor visual tracking.
- Increased irritability.
- Hypotonia or loss of milestones.

Key Differentials to Consider:

<u>Condition</u>	<u>Distinguishing factors</u>
Benign Myoclonus	No developmental regression, isolated movements.
Gastroesophageal Reflux	Not rhythmic or clustered; occurs during or after feeding.
Normal Moro (startle) Reflex	Triggered by stimuli, no clusters.
Other Seizure Types	Different patterns and progression.

DIAGNOSTIC STEPS

- History & Video: Encourage caregivers to record episodes.
- Neurologic Exam: Evaluate tone, reflexes, developmental status.
- Urgent EEG: Look for hypsarrhythmia or modified hypsarrhythmia.
- Brain MRI: Assess for structural causes.
- Metabolic/Genetic Workup: If no structural etiology found.

URGENCY & TREATMENT

- Time-sensitive emergency!
 - Early treatment improves outcomes.
 - First-line therapies:
 - Adrenocorticotrophic Hormone (ACTH)
 - High-dose oral corticosteroids
 - Vigabatrin (especially for tuberous sclerosis complex)
 - Refer immediately to pediatric neurology.
- Remember: Delays in diagnosis and treatment can lead to permanent developmental disability.

Resources & Contact Information

- National Association of Epilepsy Centers:
www.naec.epilepsy.org
- Home | REN: www.rareepilepsynetwork.org
- Epilepsy Alliance America: www.epilepsyallianceamerica.org
- Home - Infantile Spasms Action Network:
www.infantilespasms.org
- CURE Epilepsy - On a mission to find a cure:
www.cureepilepsy.org
- Pediatric Epilepsy Research Consortium: www.perc-epilepsy.org
- Infantile Spasms & West Syndrome:
www.knowinfantilespasms.com



Find community and learn more about our mission to raise awareness for
Infantile Spasms and support families impacted at:

www.tykeswithspikes.org.
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