

What is Global Development Delay?

In our son's situation, Global Developmental Delay is a condition that is a result of a brain injury. Brain injuries can occur during pregnancy, or birth or due to an environmental factor like a severe infection, blunt trauma or cancer. In Travis' case his brain injury occurred due to restricted blood flow to the brain during his third trimester of development. Brain injuries can be relatively minor or extremely severe. Symptoms can vary and be vast. The five senses, gross and fine motor skills, and mental cognition can all be affected. Any function the brain controls can be affected, which can at times cause chronic illnesses such as seizure disorders/epilepsy, respiratory issues, etc..

Recovery

Various therapies such as physical, occupational, and speech can improve quality of life and independent daily living skills. Professional medical care in the fields of neurology, orthopedics, gastroenterology, etc., is essential for long term viability.

Travis' Story

Travis was born with a brain injury possibly caused by a stroke in utero. Travis had a feeding tube put in because of his failure to thrive when he was 16 months old. Poor muscle tone and coordination has made it extremely difficult for Travis to eat by mouth and had also caused him to develop severe scoliosis (curvature of the spine). At the age of 14, Travis had a spinal fusion done which corrected the 90 degree curve in his spine to approximately 30 degrees presently.

Travis also suffers from a seizure disorder, which we are slowly getting under control through the use of the Ketogenic Diet. Since he has started the diet, his seizures have decreased from 13 times a day down to 2 times a day, with some days being seizure free. We have discontinued one of his seizure medicines and are in the process of lowering the dose of the other medication. Since discontinuing Phenobarbital, Travis no longer seems like he is in a drunken stupor all day. Travis is now a bright, alert and gregarious teenager.

Travis is home schooled and at this point only receives physical therapy once a week for one hour. Travis uses a special walker that helps provide exercise and some mobility. We are looking into feeding therapy with the goal that one day he will get enough nourishment orally and will no longer need the feeding tube. We also hope to be able to find therapists who can help us to help him communicate and become more mobile and independent.



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