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Coping With Epilepsy In Children And Young People

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Epilepsy
in Children and
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Synopsis

Epilepsy, the most common neurological disorder, affects some 50 million people worldwide, and is about twice as common in children as in adults (about 700 per 100,000 in children under 16 compared to 330 per 100,000 in adults). Epilepsy is marked by recurrent seizures, the result of sudden excessive electrical discharges involving different parts of the brain, and vary from the briefest lapses of attention or muscle jerks to severe and prolonged convulsions. Although for many children epilepsy is relatively benign, it can have profound social, physical and psychological consequences, and there is a high prevalence of psychiatric disorders in children and teenagers with epilepsy. For some, it can be said to be catastrophic because the seizures are so difficult to control and because they are so strongly associated with neurological impairment. Although epilepsy may be controlled with drugs in up to 70 per cent of cases, it is still associated with a slightly increased risk of mortality, especially SUDEP, or sudden unexplained death. Living in the shadow of epilepsy obviously has enormous consequences for young people, and there is a real need for an up to date book which looks at behavioral and emotional issues as well as medical ones, and which also explores complementary therapies and self-management issues. This book looks at: causes and triggers of childhood and teenage epilepsy; types of epilepsy, including those particular to young people (ie juvenile myoclonic); seizure control and outgrowing epilepsy; transition from childhood to teenage years, including transition to adult care; hormones, sex and contraception; independence, self-image and confidence, social life and parties, alcohol, driving, etc; school, college and university; and, careers.

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