**Epilepsy Syndromes of Childhood & Adolescence**

**BENIGN CHILDHOOD EPILEPSY WITH OCCIPITAL PAROXYSMS (BCEOP)**

BCEOP can start at any age from 15 months to 17 years but usually begins in middle childhood. About one-third of the children have a family history of epilepsy; and some of the children have had seizures with feverish illnesses (febrile convulsions) before starting to have BCEOP. Most children with this condition have normal neurological and learning abilities.

**SYMPTOMS**

The seizures usually affect vision. Complete or partial visual loss in about half the children who have this condition. Some may experience a sensation of flashing lights. Visual hallucinations are rare but occur in some children. About half have jerking of one side of the body; automatic movements or involuntary movement during a seizure, which may involve mouth, hand, leg, or body movements etc. are rarer and generalised tonic-clonic seizures may also occur. A quarter of seizures are followed immediately by a headache and vomiting. Younger children tend to present with nocturnal motor seizures.

In the EEG (electroencephalogram) test which records the ongoing electrical activity in the brain, abnormalities are seen in the occipital region (the most posterior part of the brain). As a result some children may have seizures as they go from a dark area into a brighter one or from a well lit area into a dark one.

**DIAGNOSIS**

A full complete history, given to the doctor, is always essential in making a diagnosis.

An EEG (electroencephalogram) test which measures the ongoing electrical activity in the brain, will show a pattern which will help to confirm the diagnosis of BCEOP.

Brain MRI and CT scans are normal.

**TREATMENT**

The seizures respond readily to anti-epileptic drugs such as Valporate (Epilim), or Carbamazepine (Tegretol).

**PROGNOSIS**

The outlook is good for neurological development. There are educational problems only in rare cases. The seizures usually get better by puberty but in a very small percentage of cases they persist into adulthood.