

At What Point Do You Suggest Surgery?

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Disclosures

- I have no relevant disclosures to this topic

Outline

- Intractable Epilepsy
- Epileptic Encephalopathies
- Types of Surgeries
- When to Suggest Surgery

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So far...

- What is an epileptic encephalopathy
- Genetics in EE
- Predicting epilepsy in TSC
- Medication choices
- Ketogenic diet
- Super refractory status

Today

- When to consider surgery
- How soon and what kind of surgery
- Neuromodulation

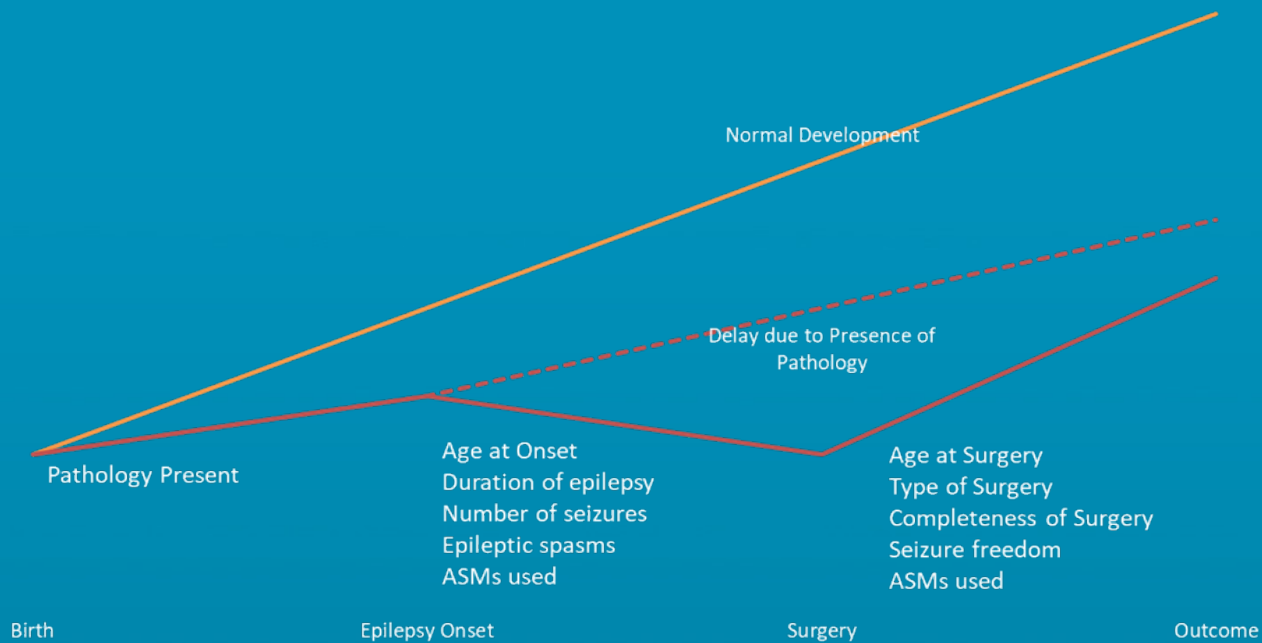
Epilepsy and Intractability

- One in 26 people will be diagnosed with epilepsy in their life¹
 - More common than Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Multiple Sclerosis, and Parkinson's Disease combined
- Intractable epilepsy is defined as failure to achieve sustained seizure freedom from²
 - Adequate trials of two tolerated medications
 - Appropriately chosen for the seizure type
 - Whether as monotherapies or in combination
- About one in three patients with epilepsy will be classified as having intractable epilepsy³

Impact of Epilepsy

- Children and adults are at different risks cognitively from refractory epilepsy with greater vulnerability in children thought related to ongoing development and learning in this group⁴
- Some effects on cognition and behavior in epilepsy may be independent of the condition or its treatment, and be related to family adaptation to the diagnosis⁵
- Often some neurodevelopmental changes exist at baseline before the onset of epilepsy⁶

Impact of Surgery on Cognition



- A variety of factors impact a child's individual developmental trajectory
- In one study, 20% of children had ≥ 15 IQ/DQ point gain⁸
- Improvement would be expected when the epileptogenic zone removed was leading to large network abnormalities and a widespread functional deficit zone⁹

Adapted from Van Schooneveld and Braun, 2013

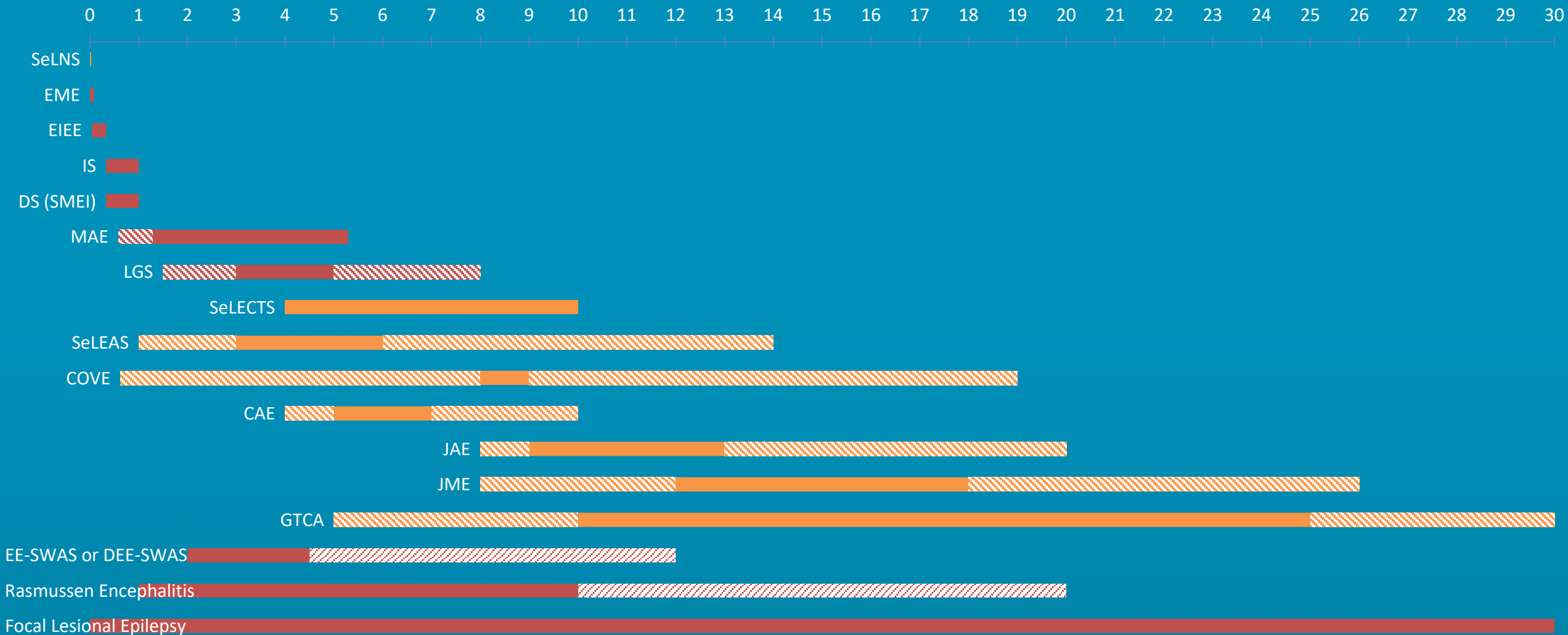
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Developmental and Epileptic Encephalopathies

- In 2017 the term was updated to reflect that the brain function is altered by both the epilepsy and the underlying pathology¹⁰
 - A patient with a developmental encephalopathy may have a predisposition to seizures, but this is considered different from a DEE
 - The magnitude of developmental impact caused by epilepsy may be difficult to distinguish
- Long term developmental outcome is severely impaired though may vary based upon etiology¹¹

Age of Onset of Epilepsy Syndromes including Epileptic Encephalopathies



Response of DEE to Surgery

- Compared to medical treatment, surgery may lead to
 - 52% seizure free at three years from surgery, 15.7% from medical treatment¹⁶
 - Improved Developmental Quotient at 3 years in surgical group¹⁶
- Earlier surgical treatment may lead to improved developmental outcome¹⁷
 - Seen in a study of surgery outcomes comparing infantile EE without spasms versus infantile EE with spasms
 - Treated Spasms group went to surgery earlier and did better* while non-spasms group went to surgery later and had worse development
- Palliative surgeries can also provide a benefit
 - Earlier time to VNS improves long term response and QOL¹⁸

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Surgery

Resective

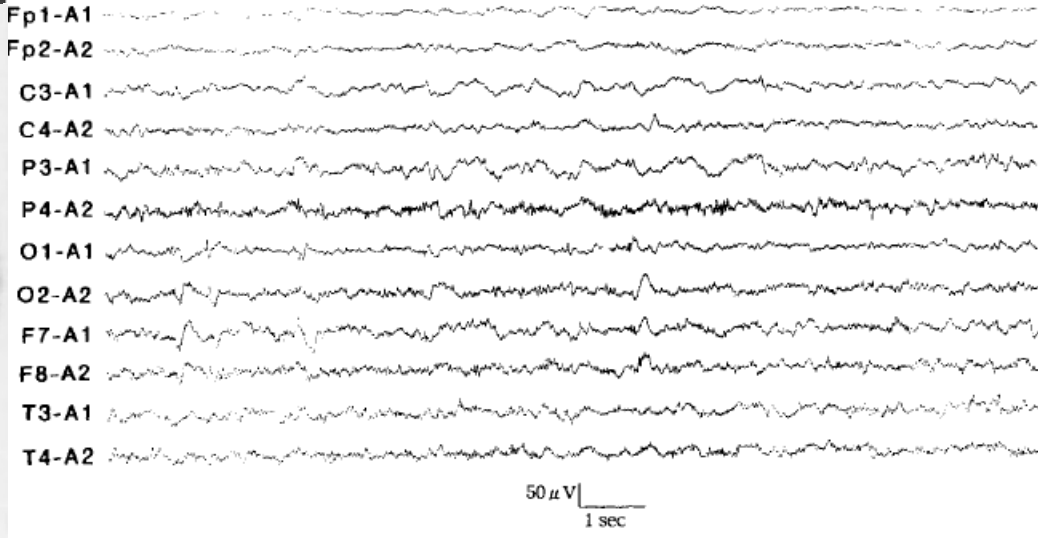
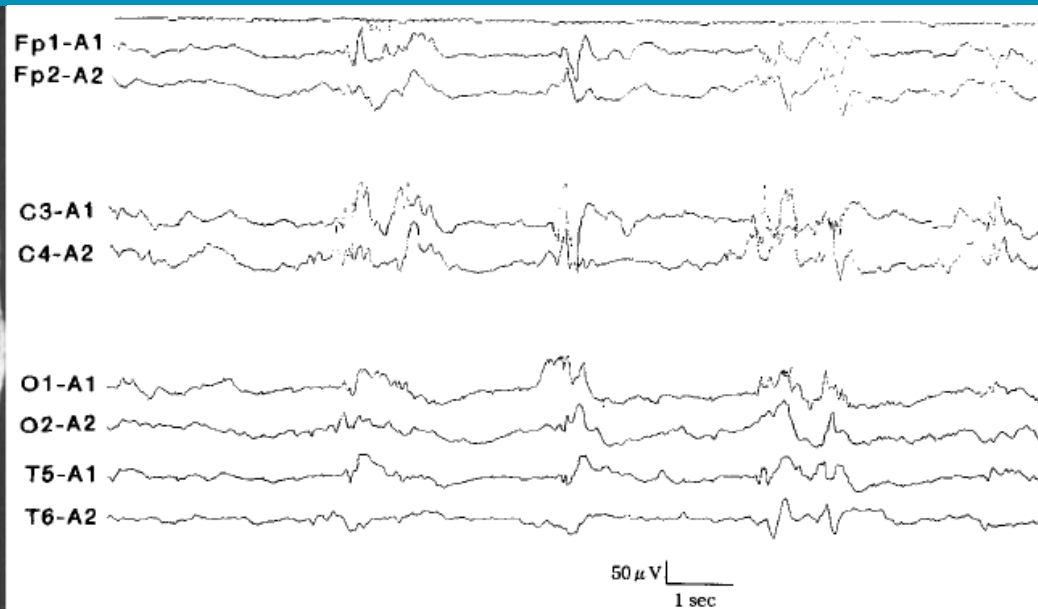
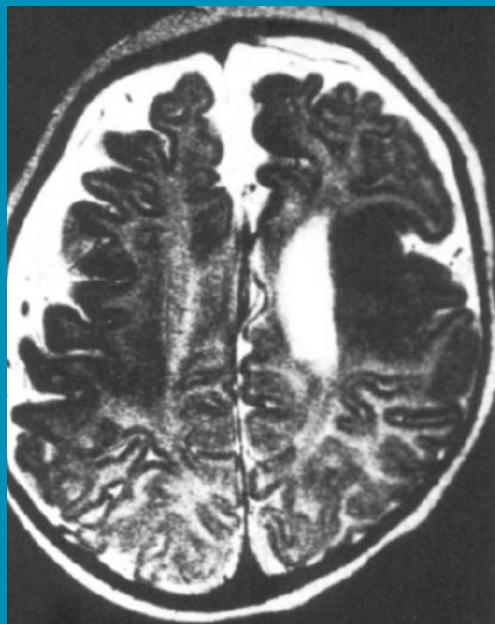
Corticectomy

Lesionectomy

Lobectomy

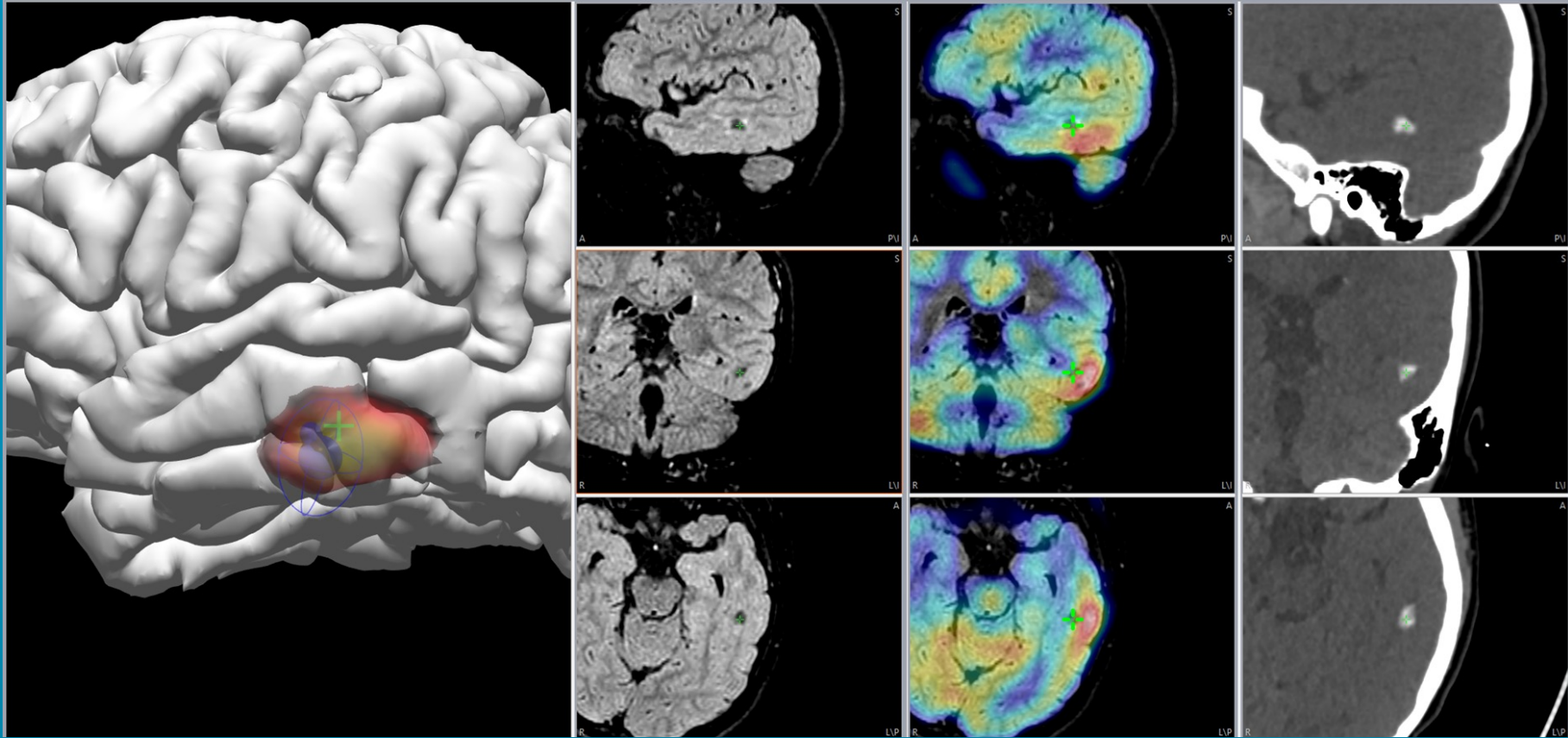
Candidacy for Focal Procedures

- Epileptic encephalopathies may present with a variety of focal features clinically that could suggest candidacy including¹⁹
 - Focal seizures
 - Hemiparesis
 - Asymmetric spasms
 - Focal imaging findings
 - Focal EEG features



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 - Focal seizures
 - Hemiparesis
 - Asymmetric spasms
 - Focal imaging findings
 - Focal EEG features
- Especially below age 2 years children can have generalized appearing seizures and generalized EEG patterns secondary to focal epilepsy²²

Surgery

Resective

Ablative

Corticectomy

Lesionectomy

Lobectomy

LITT

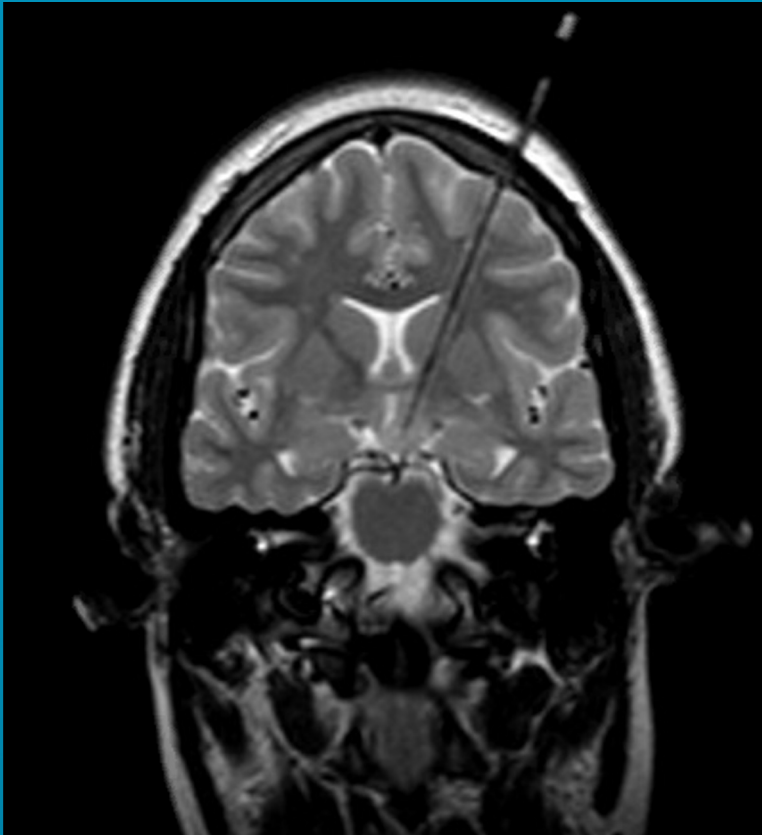
RFTT

MRgFUS

LITT

- Laser energy delivered by fiberoptical catheter placed by the Neurosurgeon
 - Precise targeting with Neuronavigation
 - MRI monitoring of temperature changes
 - Result is targeted tissue destruction that is controllable and predictable
- Rates of seizure reduction and developmental improvement in TSC may be comparable to open resection²³
- May require a staged approach in multifocal cases, such as TSC²⁴

Hypothalamic Hamartoma



- HH causes Gelastic Seizures and Epileptic Encephalopathy²⁵
 - Generalized and Focal seizures may also develop
 - Surgical treatment may resolve the encephalopathy and stop the seizures
- A 93% success rate has been reported at 1 year, though with 23% reporting repeat ablation²⁶

Surgery

Resective

Ablative

Disconnective

Corticectomy

Lesionectomy

Lobectomy

LITT

RFTT

MRgFUS

Multilobar
Disconnection

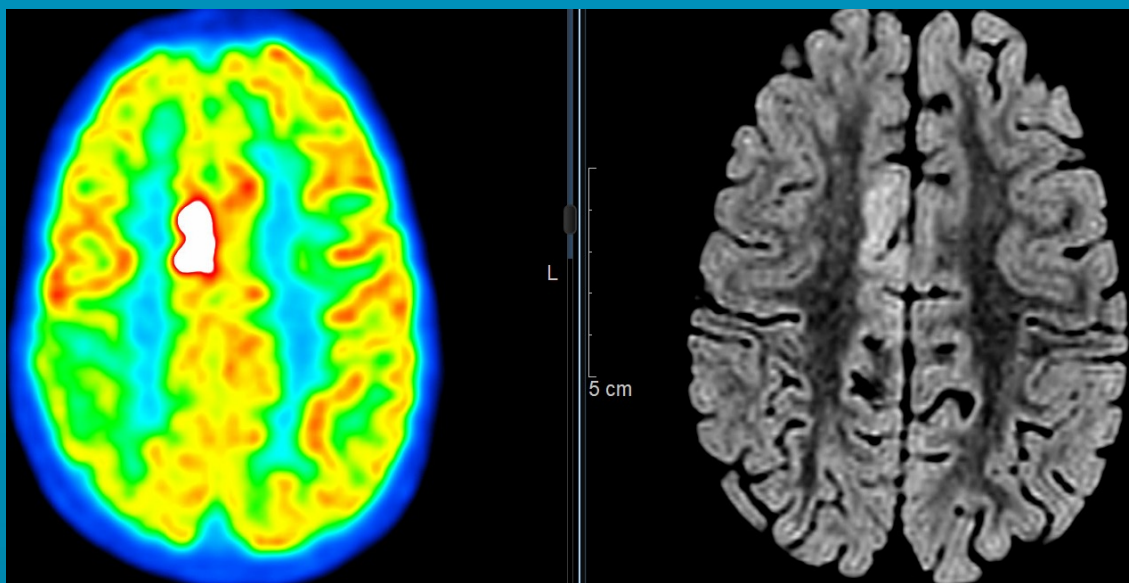
Hemispherectomy

Corpus Callosotomy



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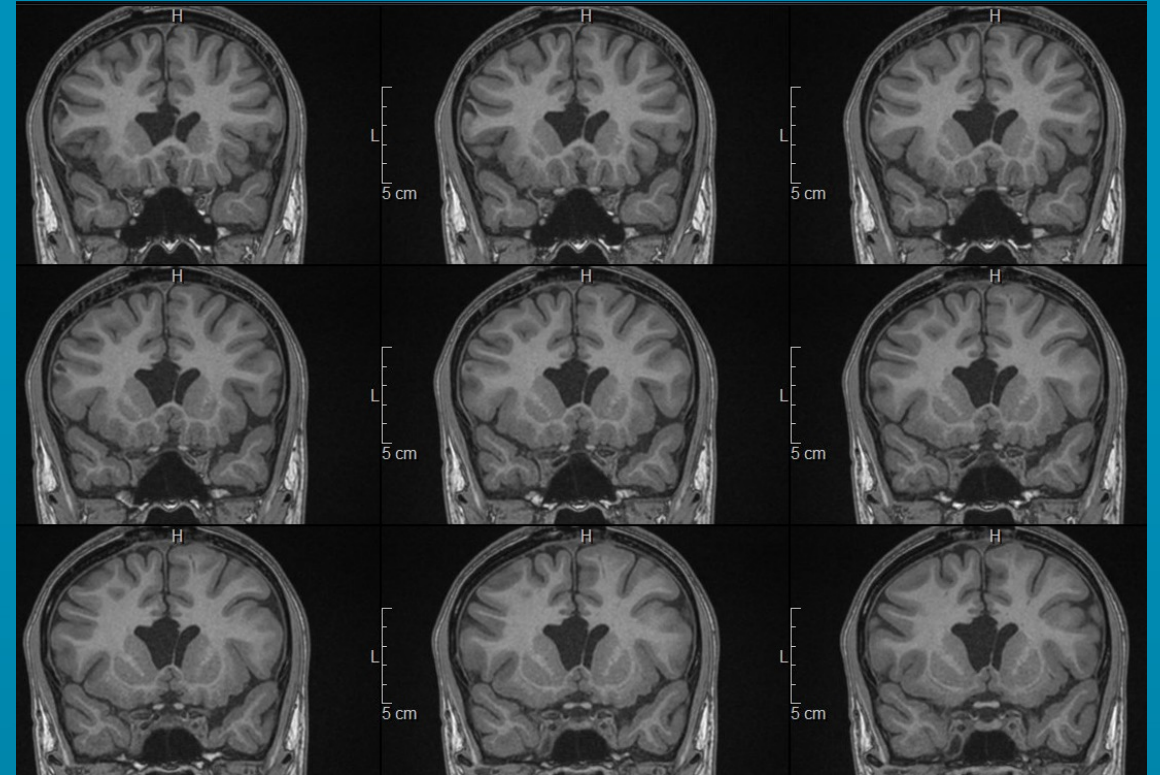


- Child presented with left body Epilepsia Partialis Continua
- Video EEG captured seizures independently from right temporal, right frontal/central regions
- PET performed during EPC with focal hypermetabolism as well as hemispheric hypometabolism
- Biopsy of the hypermetabolism consistent with Rasmussens Encephalitis
- Underwent right functional hemispherectomy and is seizure free

Hemispherectomy

- Has been utilized for congenital and acquired pathologies for epileptic encephalopathies
 - Hemimegalencephaly
 - Sturge Weber Syndrome
 - Rasmussen Encephalitis
 - Hypoxic Ischemic Injury
- In Hemimegalencephaly, seizure freedom and epilepsy duration correlate with developmental outcomes²⁷
 - Developmental Quotient declined with each month's delay in surgery
- Seizure freedom rates typically higher with unilateral pathology

- Nonverbal patient with chromosomal abnormality and Lennox Gastaut Syndrome
- Most disabling seizure type were drop seizures, proven atonic drops
- Underwent Corpus Callosotomy with resolution of drops for 4 years
- Other generalized seizure types remained, treated with medications



Callosotomy

- Corpus Callosotomy can have a profound effect on drop attacks associated to epileptic encephalopathies
 - One study had 94% with freedom or <90% reduction in drop attacks from total disconnection, only 65% with partial resection²⁸
 - Children tend to have better response than adults²
- In a study of children with generalized epilepsy after infantile spasms²⁹
 - 8 of 9 had cessation of drops with completion of callosotomy
 - 7 of 10 with epileptic spasms at time of callosotomy had resolution of the spasms

Callosotomy

- Partial callosotomy is often attempted with option to complete callosotomy if response is insufficient
 - Higher rates of complications are seen with initial total callosotomy than are seen with partial followed by completion³⁰
- Corpus callosotomy is suggested to be more effective for drop attacks than Vagus Nerve Stimulation³¹⁻³²
 - Need to weigh the risks of each procedure
 - If drop attacks are the predominant seizure type, CC is preferred³²

Surgery

Resective

Ablative

Disconnective

Neuromodulation

Corticectomy

Lesionectomy

Lobectomy

LITT

RFTT

MRgFUS

Multilobar
Disconnection

Hemispherectomy

Corpus Callosotomy

RNS

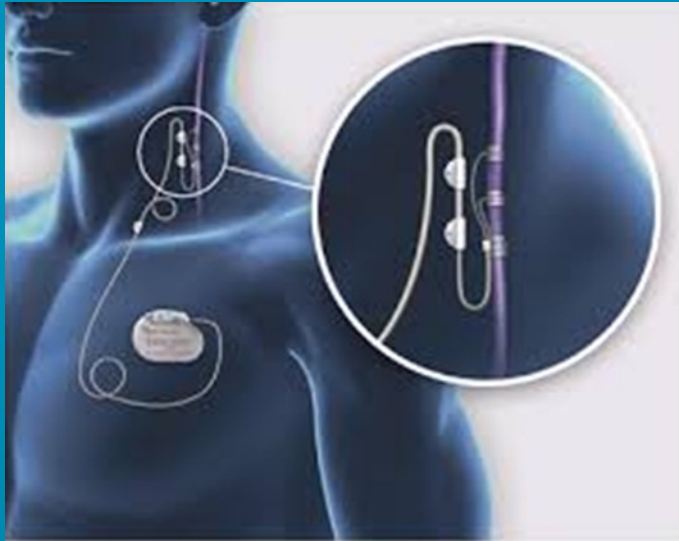
VNS



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Vagus Nerve Stimulation



- Stimulation of the vagus nerve results in activation of a vago-solitario-parabrachial pathway which has widespread innervation to the limbic system, thalamus, and cortex³³
- Response may be predictable for patients with higher preoperative EEG spectral symmetry or stronger thalamocortical functional connectivity³⁴⁻³⁵

Vagus Nerve Stimulation

- VNS is often recommended over CC in Lennox Gastaut syndrome due to perceived differences in risks³²
- Earlier time to VNS improves long term response and QOL^{18,36}
- Settings may be best optimized if titrated rapidly to a current of 1.65 mA or higher in less than 3 months³⁶⁻³⁷
 - Progressively higher current amplitudes may be less effective (inverted U shaped curve)
- Response rate seems to improve with time and may be better for generalized seizures than focal in seizures associated to HIE³⁸

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Key Considerations

- Understand the patient's Seizure type being targeted from surgery
- Imaging findings and clinical features will help determine possibility of resection, ablation, or disconnection procedures
- Long term cognitive impacts from underlying condition may be intrinsically limiting, but patients may still gain much from seizure reduction
- Earlier intervention is often associated with better responses

Special Cases

- An 8 month old underwent a right occipital disconnection and multiple subpial transection in the right temporal lobe despite normal MRI but supportive EEG and clinical features³⁹
 - Immediately had a 95% seizure reduction and improved quality of life
 - Found to have FCD type 1A
 - 6 months after surgery was found to have STXBP1 mutation

Special Cases

- A 2 year old with seizures since 10 months, developmental stagnation, left temporal lobe seizures, and MRI subtle lesion with concordant PET hypometabolism in the left temporal lobe underwent temporal lobectomy⁴⁰
 - PCDH19 de novo mutation was discovered prior to surgery
 - She had her longest seizure freedom of 10 months after surgery
 - Severity was reduced – pre-operatively requiring bag-mask ventilation with many seizures, not required post-operatively
 - Development has begun to improve following the surgery

The Lesson

- Genetic information could have precluded either of these patients from surgery
- Despite the genetic findings, some benefit was obtained for each
- The majority of information regarding genetic features and surgery comes from case reports or small cohort studies, limiting direct conclusions
- If epilepsy surgery is to be considered in these cases, it should be done cautiously as outcome data from literature may not apply

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Thank You

