Genetic screening of children with epilepsy could lead to better treatments

A new study supports routine genetic testing for epilepsy in young children with seizures.

…

“Identifying the precise cause of a child’s epilepsy as soon as possible would help us choose the most effective treatment to control seizures early on, which is important for healthier brain development,” [lead author Anne Berg, of the Stanley Manne Children’s Research Institute at Lurie Children’s Hospital of Chicago said].

The study included information on 775 children across the United States who developed seizures before age 3. Testing showed that 40 percent of them had specific genetic factors that caused epilepsy.

Genetic testing also provided a diagnosis in 25 percent of patients who had epilepsy with an otherwise unknown cause, the findings showed.

…

“This genetic information may also help identify which drugs might help and also which drugs to avoid. The same drug could stop seizures in one child and provoke seizures in another based on the gene affected and how it is affected. This level of genetic information is extremely valuable,” Berg said.

“This could be a game-changer in epilepsy diagnosis and could make precision medicine part of standard clinical practice,” she said.

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion, and analysis. Read full, original post: Genetic Testing Can Help Pinpoint Epilepsy Earlier