

# TALKING TO THE DOCTOR ABOUT YOUR CHILD AND EPILEPSY GENE PANELS



As a parent or caregiver, you are most familiar with what your child is experiencing. By sharing your knowledge, you are not only advocating for your child, but also ensuring that your child's doctor is fully informed.

Science is constantly evolving. Even if your child had a genetic test in the past, it may not have been specific for epilepsy or included the latest genes linked to seizures.

## Questions you *didn't* know to ask your child's doctor

- I know it's not always possible to know the cause of epilepsy, but could my child's epilepsy be genetic?
- Are any of these symptoms related to my child's epilepsy?

Be sure to report any **language development delay, motor disturbances, change in seizure types**, or if your child has had **staring spells**—brief losses of awareness characterized by a blank expression, possibly with facial twitching, also known as absence or daydream seizures.

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- Even though no one in the family has had seizures before my child, can the cause be genetic?
- Are there any genetic causes of epilepsy that could affect my child's care?
- Could an epilepsy gene panel tell whether my child's epilepsy has a genetic cause?
- Could results from a gene panel lead to possible treatment options?
- Are there any foods or medications that my child should avoid?
- Are there any support or advocacy groups available for families like mine?

For some epilepsies, genetic testing may be one of the most direct and cost-effective ways to find out why your child is having a seizure.<sup>1</sup>

Talk to your child's doctor and ask for an epilepsy gene panel as soon as possible

**Reference: 1.** Pal DK, Pong AW, Chung WK. Genetic evaluation and counseling for epilepsy. *Nat Rev Neurol.* 2010;6:445-453.