

Collaborative care for people living with tics and Tourette syndrome

CASE STUDY

Ali is a 7-year-old-boy. His mum (Elicia) and dad (Aaron) have two other children, Olivia (5) and Liam (3).

About a year ago, Elicia noticed that Ali was blinking and squinting a lot. His teacher at the time also mentioned it and suggested that Elicia could perhaps have him checked to see if there was a problem with his eyes. Elicia took Ali to an Optometrist who advised that his vision was normal and nothing unusual was found. Although relieved, Elicia was still perplexed about Ali's excessive blinking and squinting. Elicia thought to herself, "oh well it's just a stage he is going through".

He still blinks and squints a lot, but it doesn't cause him any obvious discomfort and he doesn't complain about it, so Elicia has not taken any further action.

Ali loves school and is doing well academically, however his teacher reports that he has difficulty staying focused at times. At a recent parent teacher meeting the teacher told Elicia that she feels that while Ali is doing well, he's not reaching his full potential.

She also mentioned that lately she has noticed that Ali is very easily distracted, is very fidgety in class and seems to be having trouble sitting still. She went on to say that his behaviour is starting to disrupt his classmates and that perhaps it might be beneficial for him to see a paediatrician to be checked for ADHD.

After the meeting, Elicia asked Ali if he still enjoys school and he replied, "yes but sometimes the teacher gives us boring things to do". Elicia then concluded that Ali's fidgeting, lack of concentration and not sitting still was due to him being bored so didn't follow through on the teacher's recommendation to see a paediatrician.

More recently Ali has been repeatedly grunting and twitching his nose. Thinking he might have an allergy Elicia took him to the GP. The GP prescribed an allergy treatment and said to come back in a fortnight for follow-up.

In the meantime, a relief teacher reprimanded Ali for pulling faces at her. He became quite upset and has started becoming reluctant to go to school. Elicia decided to bring forward the appointment to see the GP.