From the beginning of its existence the “side effects” of GAPS* Nutritional Protocol in many of my patients was the disappearance of fits, seizures, tics, spasms and involuntary movements, whether truly epileptic or not. In many children the fits just stop and never come back, in others the severity and frequency of seizures reduce gradually or stop altogether or stabilise at some manageable level. My clinical experience has led me to a simple conclusion: the majority of epileptic seizures are the result of two factors, which work in combination:

1) Damaged gut wall. A damaged “leaky” gut wall lets in a plethora of very toxic substances that reach the brain and trigger the seizures, fits, tics, spasms, involuntary movements, etc. The toxins are produced by the abnormal gut flora, and the mixture of toxins can be quite individual, depending on what kind of pathogens the person has in the gut. The damaged gut wall also lets through partially digested foods, activating immunity and creating food allergies and intolerances, which in themselves can manifest as seizures, fits, tics, spasms and involuntary movements. I have children in my clinic who only have fits after eating particular foods.

2) Nutritional deficiencies. In a person with abnormal gut flora the gut is in no fit state to digest food properly and nourish the body. Deficiencies in folic acid, B6, manganese and B1 have been recorded as causing seizures. Other nutritional deficiencies, such as in magnesium, zinc, amino acids, fatty acids and fat-soluble vitamins, have not been studied as well yet in relation to epilepsy, but they may be just as important. A person with abnormal gut flora always has nutritional deficiencies: they are an integral part of GAPS.

A very small percentage of seizures are triggered by a physical focus in the brain, such as a tumour, a vascular malformation or a scar left after trauma, infection, or a stroke. But even in these cases, when the diet is changed to remove nutritional deficiencies and reduce the level of toxicity getting into the brain of the person, the seizures reduce in frequency or disappear altogether. Some seizures can be triggered by environmental toxins, which the person has become particularly sensitive to, getting in from the outside. I have a mildly autistic child in my clinic who has grand mal seizures only when he is exposed to the smell of paint, when the woodwork in the house has been freshly painted. These cases are rare; the majority of cases, in my experience, are due to the GAP Syndrome, particularly in children. These are the cases which our mainstream medicine classifies as idiopathic.

[*GAPS refers to Gut and Psychology Syndrome. Excerpted from page 82 to 84 of “Gut and Psychology Syndrome” by Natasha Campbell-McBride, M.D. The British spellings of words like “stabilise” and “tumour” have been left as shown in the book.]