



Savant Syndrome

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To the Editor: We report a case of 17-y-old calendar savant, diagnosed at 2 y as ASD (autism spectrum disorder) based on the childhood autism rating scale (score 34) and DSM IV TR. At around 8 y, he started telling the dates of the Sundays his uncle came home. He knew the correct date and day of random events from 2005 to 2021. He now tells the date-specific number of COVID cases in the state. He has mild intellectual disability (IQ - 50), has independent ADL (activities of daily living) skills. He had tonic clonic seizures at 15 y with anger outbursts. He was treated with oxcarbamazepine, propranolol, and aripiprazole. He attends a govt. school, has passed 10th grade with a scribe, and is studying humanities.

Savant syndrome is seen in mentally disabled people as some ‘island of genius’ contrary to the overall handicap. It was first described by Dr Langdon Down as “idiot savant” (1887). Males outnumber females (6:1). It occurs in up to 37% of autistic individuals. Suggested explanations are mind-blindness [1], obsessive over-rehearsal of skills [2], ‘veridical mapping’, ability to perceive regularities within and between systems [3], synaesthesia—letters, numbers, and sounds invoke sensory experiences (colors). Savant skills range from ‘splinter skills’—beyond the individual’s

overall functioning level, to ‘talented’—the skill is exceptional compared to intellectually impaired individuals, to ‘prodigious’—the skill is remarkable compared to general population. Savant skills can be trained and used to improve socialization.

Declarations

Conflict of Interest None.

References

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