



Case of Bobby Baldwin

DELIRIUM

Bobby Baldwin is a 7-year-old Caucasian male. He was taken to the hospital because he appeared to have ingested insecticide. While at the hospital, he was interviewed by a health care professional. When asked his address, he answered correctly but then spelled the name of the city as the word *house*. When asked about his birthday, he gave the wrong year for when he was born. He then said, “Jerry, get up and stand on this. Who said you could wear a blue jacket?” When asked about his hospital experience, he said, “Whose funeral—all the cars around mean a funeral—I was in the hospital 2 or 3 days.” When asked about what he last ate, he said, “Today is Thursday—it’s April—A B C. That is the alphabet. Jerry doesn’t know the alphabet.” He misperceived the 6’4”, 200-pound male health care worker as his mother. When identifying common objects, he answered all incorrectly—that is, a pen clip was a cross, a pen point was a cross and then a tent, and to the remaining objects he said, “How many

hamburgers did you get?” He was unable to draw the geometric objects. Bobby also lost track in the middle of some of the tasks, such as counting backward.

When reexamined some 3 days later, Bobby was alert. He gave his correct birthday and address and knew what day it was. He could remember what he had last eaten. He could also draw geometric objects. He did complain of fatigue during the examination. The health care professional who examined Bobby concluded that there were no longer signs of delirium. Bobby did, however, show signs of mild central nervous system problems related to having ingested the insecticide.

Based on Dane G. Prugh, Samuel Wagonfeld, David Metcalf, & Kent Jordan. (1980). A Clinical Study of Delirium in Children and Adolescents [Supp.]. *Psychosomatic Medicine*, 42, 177–195.