Septo-Optic Dysplasia
(Morsier Syndrome)

Septo-optic dysplasia (SOD) is a rare disorder that is a result the optic nerve not developing all the way. The optic nerve is the main nerve that carries impulses from the eye to the brain to allow vision. People are born with this disorder (*congenital*). People with SOD often also have problems with the pituitary gland (controls hormone levels) and often lack an important part of the brain (the *septum pellucidum*). Intellectual ability can vary from normal intelligence to severe mental retardation. There may be times of uncontrollable shaking (*seizure*). In a few cases, yellow skin coloring (*jaundice*) may be present at birth. Some children with SOD are also born with abnormal fingers and toes.

CAUSES
The cause of SOD is not known. However, since it can happen more than once in a single family, it may be partly inherited. Often times, it happens when the mothers are very young.

SYMPTOMS
- Vision in SOD may be normal. However, more often there are different degrees of poor vision and even complete blindness.
- A rapid shaking of the eyes (*nystagmus*) may happen in infants between the ages of 1 and 8 months.

DIAGNOSIS
An eye care specialist (*ophthalmologist*) will often suspect SOD based on the way the optic nerve looks when examined, and the way the eyes move.

TREATMENT
- There is no treatment for SOD.
- Hormones are sometimes prescribed to treat the hormone imbalances that can result from problems with the pituitary gland.

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