



'Dogtor' and doctor return joy to boy with severe epilepsy

Video	Audio
	"Rye look" "Hi buddy" "Hi"
	One look at Rye, a 6-year-old Australian shepherd, and Calvin Hunter's face lights up.
Jules Hunter Calvin's mother	"I think he saves some of his biggest smiles for Rye, where you get the big Calvin smiles."
	"Jump. There we go. Good boy."
	Rye and his human handler Lindsey Wallace volunteer at the Rochester International Airport and at Mayo Clinic, where 10-year-old Calvin is seen for a severe form of epilepsy.
Anthony Fine, M.D. Pediatric Neurology Mayo Clinic	"Cal's epilepsy affects how he learns. And so children with his particular type of epilepsy, it's really hard to learn because their brain is just working too hard overnight. There's too much activity."
Dr. Anthony Fine	"It's called developmental and epileptic encephalopathy with spike wave activation in sleep. The abbreviation is DEE-SWAS. It's a mouthful. It's a very, very rare epilepsy."
	Calvin was in first grade when he was diagnosed. Medications weren't helping and caused serious side effects. He was losing the ability to write. Communication was difficult.
Jules	"Before we got here, we kind of felt like we were losing him a little bit to epilepsy. It was a really hard time."
	Jules and her husband, Jason, were in an online parent support group when someone mentioned Mayo Clinic.
Jules	"I found some of Dr. Fine's research because he studies the exact kind of epilepsy that (Calvin) has."

	"Calvin Hunter"
	With a second opinion at Mayo, Calvin's treatment plan changed, and so did Calvin. His motor skills improved. He's made progress with his learning.
Jules	"Dr. Fine is incredible. He is, I mean, he is amazing. I always say that he gave us our son back. He gave us Calvin back."
	Calvin and family travel regularly to Mayo from their home in southern Illinois. On their first trip through the Rochester airport, they spotted Lindsey and Rye doing tricks.
	"Show him you have the treat. Yeah, there you go." "Roll over."
Lindsey Wallace Rye's handler	"As soon as he really saw Rye and got to play with Rye, it was like that barrier and that awkwardness completely went away."
	Jules and Lindsey often align schedules so Calvin and Rye can meet, including one special night at the hospital.
Lindsey	"I brought him in that evening, and it was amazing. When we first came in, Calvin was kind of quiet. Rye can come on the bed, and so he asked him on the bed. And before you know it by the end of the visit, Calvin had a huge smile on his face, like massive, and Rye was laying in front of him, and Rye just had a huge smile on his face. And the two of them were just absolutely lit up."
Jules	"He's happier. That's the most important thing to me is before we didn't see these smiles a whole lot. And now we see them a lot, and we see them all the time actually."
	For the Mayo Clinic News Network, I'm Jason Howland.