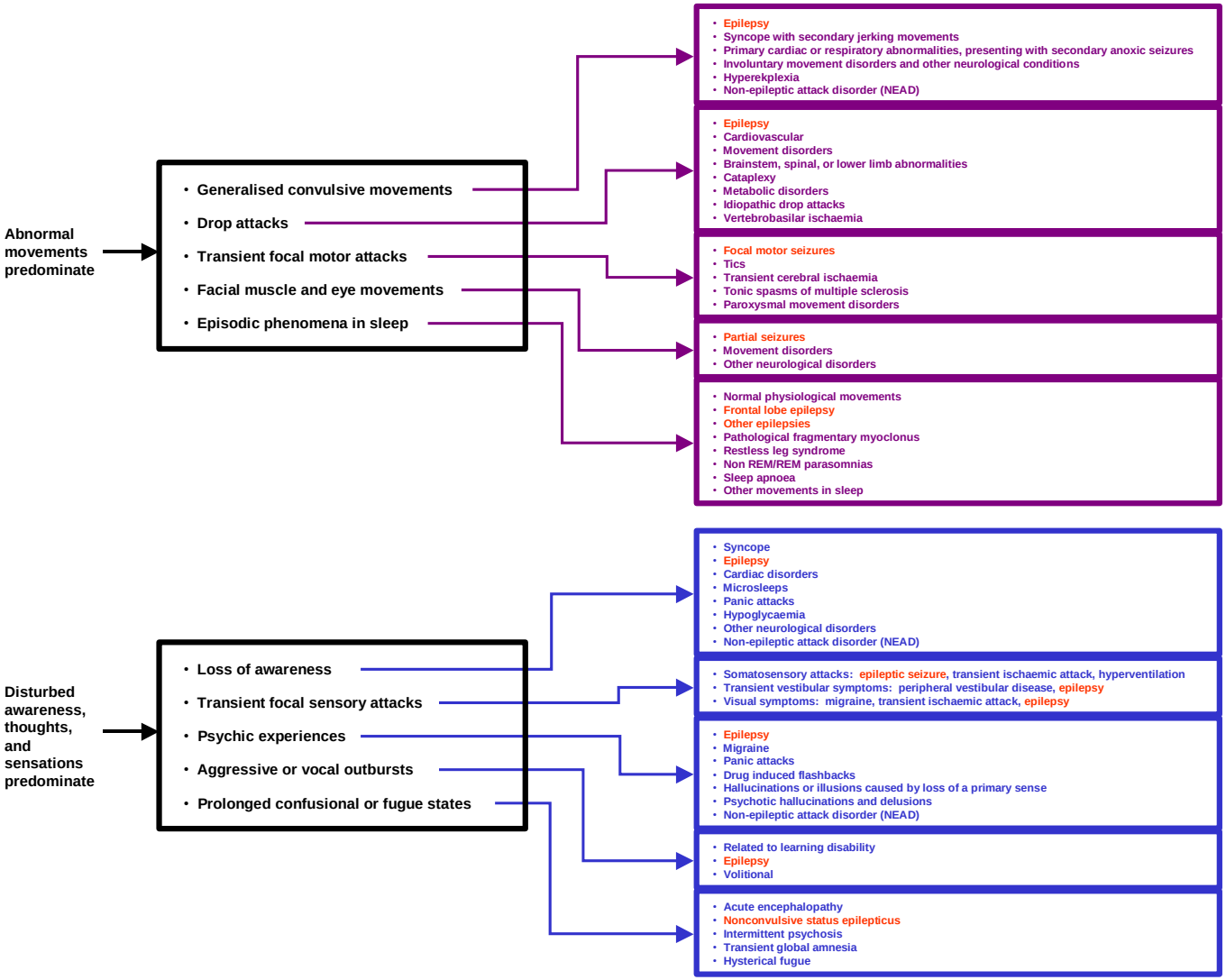
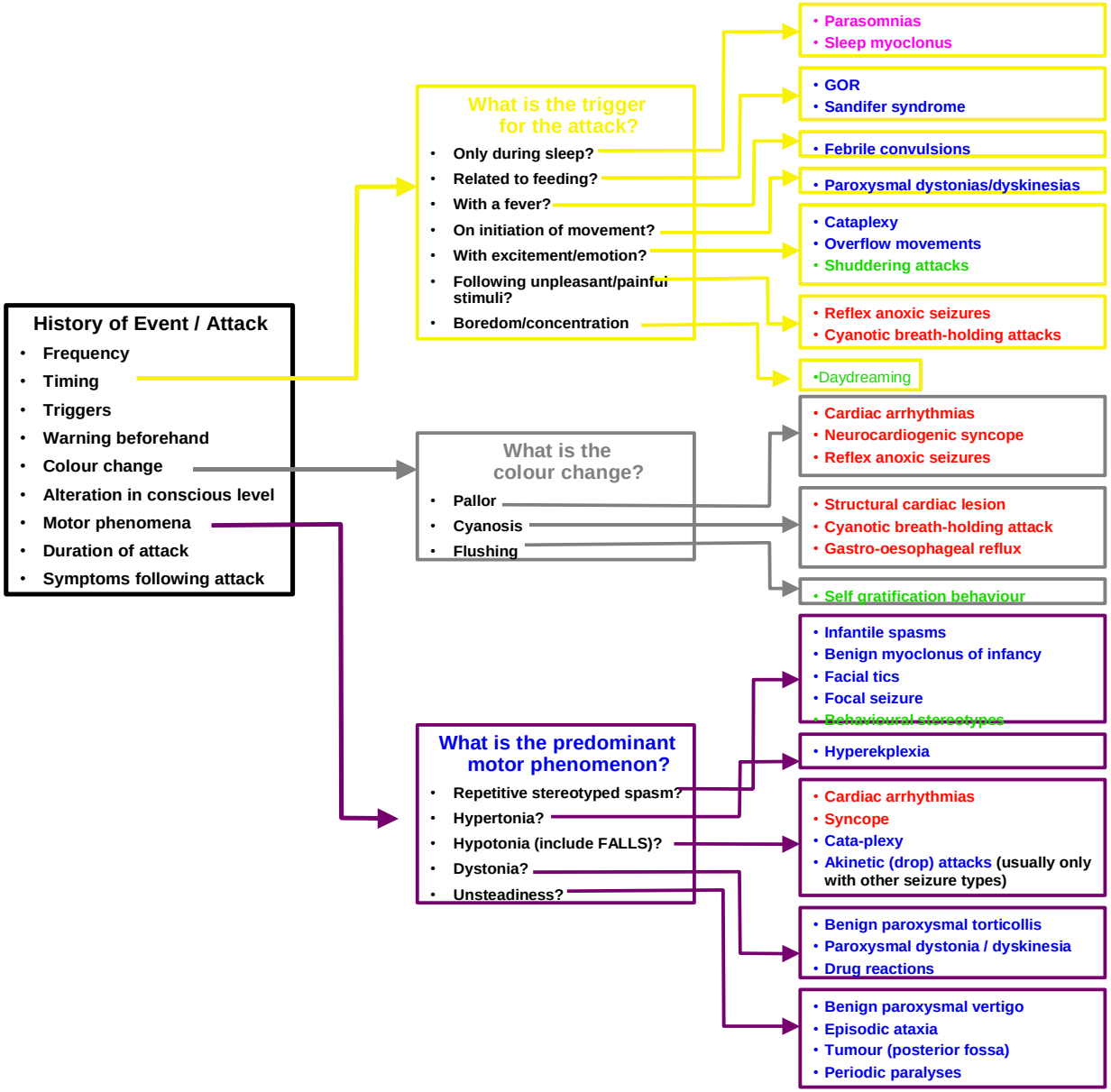
Appendix D: Differential diagnosis of epilepsy in children, young people and adults

Differential diagnosis of epilepsy in adults


Abnormal movements predominate
Generalised convulsive movements
Drop attacks
Transient focal motor attacks
Facial muscle and eye movements
Episodic phenomena in sleep
Epilepsy
Syncope with secondary jerking movements
Primary cardiac or respiratory abnormalities, presenting with secondary anoxic seizures
Involuntary movement disorders and other neurological conditions
Hyperekplexia
Non-epileptic attack disorder (NEAD)
Epilepsy
Cardiovascular
Movement disorders
Brainstem, spinal, or lower limb abnormalities
Cataplexy
Metabolic disorders
Idiopathic drop attacks
Vertebrobasilar ischaemia
Focal motor seizures
Tics
Transient cerebral ischaemia
Tonic spasms of multiple sclerosis
Paroxysmal movement disorders
Partial seizures
Movement disorders
Other neurological disorders
Normal physiological movements
Frontal lobe epilepsy
Other epilepsies
Pathological fragmentary myoclonus
Restless leg syndrome
Non REM/REM parasomnias
Sleep apnoea
Other movements in sleep
Disturbed awareness, thoughts, and sensations predominate
Loss of awareness
Transient focal sensory attacks
Psychic experiences
Aggressive or vocal outbursts
Prolonged confusional or fugue states
Syncope
Epilepsy
Cardiac disorders
Microsleeps
Panic attacks
Hypoglycaemia
Other neurological disorders
Non-epileptic attack disorder (NEAD)
Somatosensory attacks: epileptic seizure, transient ischaemic attack, hyperventilation
Transient vestibular symptoms: peripheral vestibular disease, epilepsy
Visual symptoms: migraine, transient ischaemic attack, epilepsy
Epilepsy
Migraine
Panic attacks
Drug induced flashbacks
Hallucinations or illusions caused by loss of a primary sense
Psychotic hallucinations and delusions
Non-epileptic attack disorder (NEAD)
Related to learning disability
Epilepsy
Volitional
Acute encephalopathy
Nonconvulsive status epilepticus
Intermittent psychosis
Transient global amnesia
Hysterical fugue

Differential diagnosis of epilepsy in children and young people



INFANT

- Cardiac arrhytthmias
- Hyperexplexia
- Structural cardiac lesion
- Benign myoclonus of infancy
- Paroxysmal dystonia
- Sandifers syndrome/GOR
- Benign paroxysmal torticollis
- Alternating hemiplegia
- (Infantile spasms)
- Self gratification behaviour
- Shuddering attacks
- Benign sleep myoclonus

TODDLER

- Cardiac arrhytthmias
- Reflex anoxic seizures
- Cyanotic breath-holding attacks
- Hyperekplexia
- Myoclonus
- Paroxysmal dyskinesias
- Sandifer syndrome
- Benign paroxysmal vertigo/torticollis
- Migraine
- Cataplexy
- Akinetic (drop) attacks
- (Febrile convulsions)
- Overflow movements
- Self gratification behaviour
- Stereotypies/ritualistic behaviour (eg. Children with learning difficulties)
- Head banging
- Confusional arousal
- Night terrors

OLDER CHILD

- Cardiac arrhytthmias
- Neurocardiogenic syncope
- Reflex anoxic seizures
- Neurocardiogenic syncope
- Hyperexplexia
- Myoclonus
- TICs
- Paroxysmal dyskinesias
- Benign paroxysmal vertigo/torticollis
- Migraine
- Eye movement disorders
- Episodic ataxia
- Cataplexy
- Akinetic (drop) attacks
- Day dreams
- Hyperventilation panic/anxiety attacks
- Non epileptic attack disorder
- Pseudo-syncope or psychogenic syncope
- Stereotypes/ritualistic behaviour (eg. Children with learning difficulties)
- Confusional arousal
- REM sleep disorders
- Night terrors