

# Newspaper Editor's Son Tackles His Own Disease in Film

Documentary Aims to Educate Public on Misunderstood Genetic Syndrome

By TIMOTHY JOHNSON, M.D.

ABC News Medical Editor

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Strike up a conversation with 25-year-old Quinn Bradlee, and you might find it hard to believe that he has ever had much of anything wrong with him.

But any doubt of the health challenges he has confronted quickly melts away when he describes the surgeries and health problems he has endured throughout most of his life thus far.

"I was epileptic as a little kid," he said. "After that, I started having migraines, and my migraines were so severe that every time I had a migraine I'd always end up in the hospital."

As Bradlee and his mother, Sally, told ABC News, his health issues didn't stop at migraines and seizures. In fact, Bradlee's childhood is a saga of surgery and unexplained illness.

In the time since he received an operation to repair two holes in his heart when he was only 3-months-old, Bradlee has also experienced immune problems, cognitive disorders and four surgeries to repair a cleft palate.

"Quinn was in the hospital for most of his life until he was about 16, in and out of children's hospitals," Sally recalled. "We were in the pediatrician's office two and three times a week because he always had pneumonia and bronchitis and he couldn't swim in any public pool. We couldn't travel for a long time because he was just so susceptible to everything."

And until he was 14, nobody -- not his parents, his doctors, or Bradlee himself -- believed that all of these problems were somehow connected.

"He was being treated in speech therapy, and he had already had two throat surgeries when the speech therapist, who

happened to be talking to a friend of hers at the NIH, said, 'We've got this kid here, and every time we turn around there's some weird, different thing going on,'" Sally said. "This woman said, 'You know, this sounds really familiar to me.'"

The chance conversation led the Bradlees to Dr. Robert J. Shprintzen, then at the Center for Craniofacial Disorders at the Montefiore Medical Center in Bronx, N.Y. but currently at SUNY Upstate Medical University in Syracuse, who said a mysterious genetic syndrome was to blame.

Now, Quinn -- the only son of Sally and Washington Post veteran editor Ben Bradlee -- has produced a documentary that he hopes will help others learn more about the condition that led to all of his health problems.

Read more at

<http://abcnews.go.com/Health/OnCall/story?id=3274731&page=1&CMP=OTC-RSSFeeds0312>