

## Parents explain keeping daughter small

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The parents of a Seattle girl with a brain impairment are keeping her small so they can care for her, drawing criticism from some doctors and caregivers.

Critics said the treatment to keep her small violates a person's dignity, the Los Angeles Times said Wednesday. The parents said it allows her to remain at home, where she can interact with her family.

The daughter is 9 years old and has static encephalopathy. She can't walk, talk, keep her head up, roll over or sit by herself. She receives food through a tube.

The matter became public in October, when the case was published in a national pediatric journal. Responding to critics, the parents sent e-mail Monday and began visiting Internet chatrooms with a link that tells their side of the story.

Her parents, fearing she would become too big for them to lift, move or include in family outings, decided to keep her small through "growth attenuation," a treatment that has involved a hysterectomy, surgery to prevent breast growth and high doses of estrogen. The treatment should keep her height at about 4 feet 5 and her weight at about 75 pounds.

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