

What is Epilepsy?

1 in 26 people in the United States will develop epilepsy at some point in their lifetime.

1 Introduction

Epilepsy is a neurological condition causing chronic, unprovoked seizures or periods of unusual behavior and sensations. The cause of these seizures is often unknown. A person can be diagnosed with epilepsy after two or more unprovoked seizures not caused by any other reversible medical condition.

2 Causes

New cases of epilepsy are most commonly diagnosed in children under 10 and adults over the age of 55. Seizures can be more common in people who have suffered an injury to the brain. Seizures that occur days to weeks after the initial injury are typically a result of the initial event and may go away after the injury calms down. Seizures that occur later after the injury has been treated can be caused by residual scarring to the brain. In some scenarios where seizures occur far after the initial injury, people are said to have post-traumatic epilepsy.

3 Types of Seizures

There are two different classifications of seizures depending on how they begin.

Focal Seizures: typically are a result of abnormal activity in just one area of the brain. There are 2 types of focal seizures:

- Focal seizures without loss of consciousness
- Focal seizures with impaired awareness

Generalized Seizures: involve abnormal activity in all areas of the brain. There are 6 types of generalized seizures:

- Absence seizures
- Tonic seizures
- Atonic seizures
- Clonic seizures
- Myoclonic seizures
- Tonic-clonic seizures

4 Treatment

There are a few different approaches that could be used to treat epilepsy. The most common type of treatment is seizure medication. Other approaches include surgery, dietary therapy, and neurostimulation devices. The overall goal of epilepsy treatment is to leave patients with no seizures and no side effects.

Did you know?

Epilepsy is the 4th most common neurological condition and affects over 65 million people worldwide.

For more information on Epilepsy and supportive resources please visit www.epilepsy.com

References:

<https://www.cdc.gov/epilepsy/managing-epilepsy/index.htm>

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/epilepsy/symptoms-causes/svc-20350093>

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3577135/>