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Epilepsy

Epilepsy is a brain disorder that causes people to have recurring seizures [<https://medlineplus.gov/seizures.html>]. The seizures happen when clusters of nerve cells, or neurons, in the brain send out the wrong signals. People may have strange sensations and emotions or behave strangely. They may have violent muscle spasms or lose consciousness.

Epilepsy has many possible causes, including illness, brain injury, and abnormal brain development. In many cases, the cause is unknown.

Doctors use brain scans and other tests to diagnose epilepsy. It is important to start treatment right away. There is no cure for epilepsy, but medicines can control seizures for most people. When medicines are not working well, surgery or implanted devices such as vagus nerve stimulators may help. Special diets can help some children with epilepsy.

NIH: National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke

Start Here

- About Epilepsy [<https://www.epilepsy.va.gov/Information/about.asp>] (Department of Veterans Affairs)
- Epilepsy and Seizures [<https://www.ninds.nih.gov/health-information/disorders/epilepsy-and-seizures>]  (National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.ninds.nih.gov/es/health-information/disorders/epilepsia-y-convulsiones>]

Diagnosis and Tests

- EEG (Electroencephalogram) [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/tests-procedures/eeg/about/pac-20393875?p=1>] (Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)
- Functional MRI (fMRI) [<https://www.radiologyinfo.org/en/info/fmribrain>] (American College of Radiology; Radiological Society of North America)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.radiologyinfo.org/es/info/fmribrain>]
- Head CT [<https://www.radiologyinfo.org/en/info/headct>]  (American College of Radiology; Radiological Society of North America)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.radiologyinfo.org/es/info/headct>]
- Pharmacogenetic Tests [<https://medlineplus.gov/lab-tests/pharmacogenetic-tests/>]  (National Library of Medicine)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/pruebas-de-laboratorio/pruebas-farmacogeneticas/>]

Treatments and Therapies

- Epilepsy Surgery [<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/epilepsy-surgery.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/parents/epilepsy-surgery.html>]
- Epilepsy Surgery [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/tests-procedures/epilepsy-surgery/about/pac-20393981?p=1>] (Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/es/tests-procedures/epilepsy-surgery/about/pac-20393981?p=1>]
- First Aid for Seizures [<https://www.cdc.gov/epilepsy/first-aid-for-seizures/>] (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)

Living With

- Managing Epilepsy [<https://www.cdc.gov/epilepsy/living-with/>] (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)
- Tracking Seizures [<https://www.epilepsy.com/manage/tracking>] (Epilepsy Foundation)

Related Issues

- Employees with Epilepsy/Seizure Disorder [<https://askjan.org/disabilities/Epilepsy-Seizure-Disorder.cfm>] (Office of Disability Employment Policy)
- Sudden unexpected death in epilepsy [<https://www.cdc.gov/epilepsy/sudep/>] (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)

Specifics

- Dravet Syndrome [<https://www.ninds.nih.gov/health-information/disorders/dravet-syndrome>]  (National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke)
- Lennox-Gastaut Syndrome [<https://www.ninds.nih.gov/health-information/disorders/lennox-gastaut-syndrome>]  (National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke)

Genetics

- Autosomal dominant nocturnal frontal lobe epilepsy: MedlinePlus Genetics [<https://medlineplus.gov/genetics/condition/autosomal-dominant-sleep-related-hypermotor-epilepsy>]  (National Library of Medicine)
- Autosomal dominant partial epilepsy with auditory features: MedlinePlus Genetics [<https://medlineplus.gov/genetics/condition/autosomal-dominant-epilepsy-with-auditory-features>]  (National Library of Medicine)
- Benign familial neonatal seizures: MedlinePlus Genetics [<https://medlineplus.gov/genetics/condition/benign-familial-neonatal-seizures>]  (National Library of Medicine)
- CDKL5 deficiency disorder: MedlinePlus Genetics [<https://medlineplus.gov/genetics/condition/cdkl5-deficiency-disorder>]  (National Library of Medicine)
- CHD2 myoclonic encephalopathy: MedlinePlus Genetics [<https://medlineplus.gov/genetics/condition/chd2-myoclonic-encephalopathy>]  (National Library of Medicine)
- Childhood absence epilepsy: MedlinePlus Genetics [<https://medlineplus.gov/genetics/condition/childhood-absence-epilepsy>]  (National Library of Medicine)
- CLN8 disease: MedlinePlus Genetics [<https://medlineplus.gov/genetics/condition/cln8-disease>]  (National Library of Medicine)
- Developmental and epileptic encephalopathy 1: MedlinePlus Genetics [<https://medlineplus.gov/genetics/condition/developmental-and-epileptic-encephalopathy-1/>]  (National Library of Medicine)
- Epilepsy-aphasia spectrum: MedlinePlus Genetics [<https://medlineplus.gov/genetics/condition/epilepsy-aphasia-spectrum>]  (National Library of Medicine)
- Genetic epilepsy with febrile seizures plus: MedlinePlus Genetics [<https://medlineplus.gov/genetics/condition/genetic-epilepsy-with-febrile-seizures-plus>]  (National Library of Medicine)
- GM3 synthase deficiency: MedlinePlus Genetics [<https://medlineplus.gov/genetics/condition/gm3-synthase-deficiency>]  (National Library of Medicine)
- Juvenile myoclonic epilepsy: MedlinePlus Genetics [<https://medlineplus.gov/genetics/condition/juvenile-myoclonic-epilepsy>]  (National Library of Medicine)
- Lafora progressive myoclonus epilepsy: MedlinePlus Genetics [<https://medlineplus.gov/genetics/condition/lafora-progressive-myoclonus-epilepsy>]  (National Library of Medicine)

- Lennox-Gastaut syndrome: MedlinePlus Genetics [<https://medlineplus.gov/genetics/condition/lennox-gastaut-syndrome>]  (National Library of Medicine)
- Malignant migrating partial seizures of infancy: MedlinePlus Genetics [<https://medlineplus.gov/genetics/condition/epilepsy-of-infancy-with-migrating-focal-seizures>]  (National Library of Medicine)
- Myoclonic epilepsy with ragged-red fibers: MedlinePlus Genetics [<https://medlineplus.gov/genetics/condition/myoclonic-epilepsy-with-ragged-red-fibers>]  (National Library of Medicine)
- PRICKLE1-related progressive myoclonus epilepsy with ataxia: MedlinePlus Genetics [<https://medlineplus.gov/genetics/condition/prickle1-related-progressive-myoclonus-epilepsy-with-ataxia>]  (National Library of Medicine)
- Pyridoxine-dependent epilepsy: MedlinePlus Genetics [<https://medlineplus.gov/genetics/condition/pyridoxine-dependent-epilepsy>]  (National Library of Medicine)
- Ring chromosome 14 syndrome: MedlinePlus Genetics [<https://medlineplus.gov/genetics/condition/ring-chromosome-14-syndrome>]  (National Library of Medicine)
- Ring chromosome 20 syndrome: MedlinePlus Genetics [<https://medlineplus.gov/genetics/condition/ring-chromosome-20-syndrome>]  (National Library of Medicine)
- Spinal muscular atrophy with progressive myoclonic epilepsy: MedlinePlus Genetics [<https://medlineplus.gov/genetics/condition/spinal-muscular-atrophy-with-progressive-myoclonic-epilepsy>]  (National Library of Medicine)
- STXBP1 encephalopathy: MedlinePlus Genetics [<https://medlineplus.gov/genetics/condition/stxbp1-encephalopathy/>]  (National Library of Medicine)
- Unverricht-Lundborg disease: MedlinePlus Genetics [<https://medlineplus.gov/genetics/condition/progressive-myoclonic-epilepsy-type-1>]  (National Library of Medicine)

Images

- Craniotomy - series [https://medlineplus.gov/ency/presentations/100048_1.htm] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/esp_presentations/100048_1.htm]

Statistics and Research

- Curing the Epilepsies: The Promise of Research [<https://www.ninds.nih.gov/current-research/focus-disorders/epilepsy-research/curing-epilepsies-promise-research>]  (National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke)
- Epilepsy Facts and Stats [<https://www.cdc.gov/epilepsy/data-research/facts-stats/>] (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)

Clinical Trials

- ClinicalTrials.gov: Epilepsy [<https://clinicaltrials.gov/search?cond=%22Epilepsy%22&aggFilters=status:not%20rec>]  (National Institutes of Health)

Journal Articles

References and abstracts from MEDLINE/PubMed (National Library of Medicine)

- Article: The Impact of Internet Hospital Follow-Up on the Quality of Life... [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40418570>]
- Article: Impact of a Psychoeducation on Caregiver Burden, Internalized Stigma, Anxiety, and... [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40355136>]
- Article: Examining parental participation in a successful psychological intervention for young people... [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/39673989>]
- Epilepsy -- see more articles [<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/?term=%22Epilepsy%22%5Bmajr%3Aexp%5D+AND+humans%5Bmh%5D+AND+english%5Bla%5D+AND+%22last+1+Year%22+%5Bedat%5D+AND+%28patient+education+handout%5Bpt%5D+OR+guideline%5Bpt%5D+OR+clinical+trial%5Bpt%5D%29++NOT+%28letter%5Bpt%5D+OR+case+reports%5Bpt%5D+OR+editorial%5Bpt%5D+OR+comment%5Bpt%5D%29+AND+free+full+text%5Bsb%5D+>]

Find an Expert

- Find a Doctor [<https://my.aesnet.org/FindaDoctor>] (American Epilepsy Society)
- National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke [<https://www.ninds.nih.gov/>] 

Children

- Epilepsy [<https://kidshealth.org/en/kids/epilepsy.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/kids/epilepsy.html>]
- Vagus Nerve Stimulator Therapy for Epilepsy (For Parents) [<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/vagus-nerve-stimulator.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/parents/vagus-nerve-stimulator.html>]

Teenagers

- Epilepsy [<https://kidshealth.org/en/teens/epilepsy.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/teens/epilepsy.html>]

Women

- Epilepsy and Pregnancy [<https://familydoctor.org/epilepsy-and-pregnancy/?adfree=true>] (American Academy of Family Physicians)
Also in Spanish [<https://es.familydoctor.org/epilepsia-epilepsia-y-embarazo/?adfree=true>]
- Epilepsy and Pregnancy: What You Need to Know [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/pregnancy-week-by-week/in-depth/pregnancy/art-20048417?p=1>] (Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/es/healthy-lifestyle/pregnancy-week-by-week/in-depth/pregnancy/art-20048417?p=1>]

Patient Handouts

- Brain surgery [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003018.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/003018.htm>]
- EEG [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003931.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/003931.htm>]
- Epilepsy [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000694.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/000694.htm>]
- Epilepsy in children [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/007681.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/007681.htm>]
- Epilepsy in children - discharge [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000127.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/patientinstructions/000127.htm>]
- Epilepsy or seizures - discharge [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000128.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/patientinstructions/000128.htm>]



MEDICAL ENCYCLOPEDIA

[Brain PET scan](https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/007341.htm) [https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/007341.htm]

[Brain surgery](https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003018.htm) [https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003018.htm]

[Brain surgery - discharge](https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000124.htm) [https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000124.htm]

[Craniotomy - series](https://medlineplus.gov/ency/presentations/100048_1.htm) [https://medlineplus.gov/ency/presentations/100048_1.htm]

[EEG](https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003931.htm) [https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003931.htm]

[Epilepsy](https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000694.htm) [https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000694.htm]

[Epilepsy in adults - what to ask your doctor](https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000221.htm) [https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000221.htm]

[Epilepsy in children](https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/007681.htm) [https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/007681.htm]

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[Epilepsy or seizures - discharge](https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000128.htm) [https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000128.htm]

[Head CT scan](https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003786.htm) [https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003786.htm]

Related Health Topics

[Seizures](https://medlineplus.gov/seizures.html) [https://medlineplus.gov/seizures.html]

National Institutes of Health

The primary NIH organization for research on *Epilepsy* is the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke
[http://www.ninds.nih.gov/]

NIH MedlinePlus Magazine

Fashion Icon Camila Coelho Gets Real About Epilepsy Diagnosis [https://magazine.medlineplus.gov/article/fashion-icon-camila-coelho-gets-real-about-epilepsy-diagnosis]

How to Help Someone Who Is Having a Seizure [https://magazine.medlineplus.gov/article/how-to-help-someone-who-is-having-a-seizure]

One Family's Journey to Find Epilepsy Answers [https://magazine.medlineplus.gov/article/one-familys-journey-to-find-epilepsy-answers]

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