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URL of this page: <https://medlineplus.gov/seizures.html>

Seizures

Seizures are symptoms of a brain problem. They happen because of sudden, abnormal electrical activity in the brain. When people think of seizures, they often think of convulsions in which a person's body shakes rapidly and uncontrollably. Not all seizures cause convulsions. There are many types of seizures and some have mild symptoms. Seizures fall into two main groups. Focal seizures, also called partial seizures, happen in just one part of the brain. Generalized seizures are a result of abnormal activity on both sides of the brain.

Most seizures last from 30 seconds to 2 minutes and do not cause lasting harm. However, it is a medical emergency if seizures last longer than 5 minutes or if a person has many seizures and does not wake up between them. Seizures can have many causes, including medicines, high fevers, head injuries and certain diseases. People who have recurring seizures due to a brain disorder have epilepsy [<https://medlineplus.gov/epilepsy.html>] .

NIH: National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke

Start Here

- 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)
- 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>]

Treatments and Therapies

- Convulsions - first aid - series [https://medlineplus.gov/ency/presentations/100212_1.htm] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/esp_presentations/100212_1.htm]
- First Aid for Seizures [<https://www.cdc.gov/epilepsy/first-aid-for-seizures/>] (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)
- Vagus Nerve Stimulation [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/tests-procedures/vagus-nerve-stimulation/about/pac-20384565?p=1>] (Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/es/tests-procedures/vagus-nerve-stimulation/about/pac-20384565?p=1>]

Specifics

- Absence Seizure (Petit Mal Seizure) [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/petit-mal-seizure/symptoms-causes/syc-20359683?p=1>] (Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/es/diseases-conditions/petit-mal-seizure/symptoms-causes/syc-20359683?p=1>]
- Frontal Lobe Seizures [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/frontal-lobe-seizures/symptoms-causes/syc-20353958?p=1>] (Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)

Also in Spanish [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/es/diseases-conditions/frontal-lobe-seizures/symptoms-causes/syc-20353958?p=1>]

- Temporal Lobe Seizure [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/temporal-lobe-seizure/symptoms-causes/syc-20378214?p=1>] (Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/es/diseases-conditions/temporal-lobe-seizure/symptoms-causes/syc-20378214?p=1>]
- Tonic-Clonic (Grand Mal) Seizure [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/grand-mal-seizure/symptoms-causes/syc-20363458?p=1>] (Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/es/diseases-conditions/grand-mal-seizure/symptoms-causes/syc-20363458?p=1>]

Genetics

- 15q13.3 microdeletion: MedlinePlus Genetics [<https://medlineplus.gov/genetics/condition/15q133-microdeletion>]  (National Library of Medicine)
- Alpers-Huttenlocher syndrome: MedlinePlus Genetics [<https://medlineplus.gov/genetics/condition/alpers-huttenlocher-syndrome>]  (National Library of Medicine)
- Ataxia neuropathy spectrum: MedlinePlus Genetics [<https://medlineplus.gov/genetics/condition/ataxia-neuropathy-spectrum>]  (National Library of Medicine)
- Benign familial neonatal seizures: MedlinePlus Genetics [<https://medlineplus.gov/genetics/condition/benign-familial-neonatal-seizures>]  (National Library of Medicine)
- Childhood absence epilepsy: MedlinePlus Genetics [<https://medlineplus.gov/genetics/condition/childhood-absence-epilepsy>]  (National Library of Medicine)
- Familial focal epilepsy with variable foci: MedlinePlus Genetics [<https://medlineplus.gov/genetics/condition/familial-focal-epilepsy-with-variable-foci>]  (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)
- Juvenile myoclonic epilepsy: MedlinePlus Genetics [<https://medlineplus.gov/genetics/condition/juvenile-myoclonic-epilepsy>]  (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)
- Molybdenum cofactor deficiency: MedlinePlus Genetics [<https://medlineplus.gov/genetics/condition/molybdenum-cofactor-deficiency>]  (National Library of Medicine)
- Myoclonic epilepsy myopathy sensory ataxia: MedlinePlus Genetics [<https://medlineplus.gov/genetics/condition/myoclonic-epilepsy-myopathy-sensory-ataxia>]  (National Library of Medicine)
- Pyridoxine-dependent epilepsy: MedlinePlus Genetics [<https://medlineplus.gov/genetics/condition/pyridoxine-dependent-epilepsy>]  (National Library of Medicine)

Clinical Trials

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

Journal Articles

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

- Article: FLAIR hyperintense cortical lesions in myelin oligodendrocyte glycoprotein-associated encephalitis with seizures... [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40740785>]
- Article: Unexpected Predictors of Mortality During a DENV-3 Outbreak in Western Mexico:... [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40733567>]
- Article: Time to death and its predictors among neonates with seizure in... [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40731073>]

• Seizures -- see more articles [<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/?term=%22Seizures%22%5Bmajr%3Anoexp%5D+AND+humans%5Bmh%5D+AND+english%5Bla%5D+AND+%22last+1+Year%22+%5Bedat%5D+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

- Febrile Seizures [<https://www.ninds.nih.gov/health-information/disorders/febrile-seizures>]  (National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke)
- Focal Aware Seizures (For Parents) [<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/focal-aware-seizures.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
- Focal Impaired Awareness Seizures (For Parents) [<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/focal-impaired-aware-seizures.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
- Generalized Tonic-Clonic Seizures (For Parents) [<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/tonic-clonic-seizures.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
- How to Handle a Seizure [<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/seizures-sheet.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/parents/seizures-sheet.html>]

Patient Handouts

- Absence seizure [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000696.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/000696.htm>]
- Bilateral tonic-clonic seizure [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000695.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/000695.htm>]
- EEG [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003931.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/003931.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>]
- Febrile seizures [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000980.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/000980.htm>]
- Focal seizure [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000697.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/000697.htm>]
- Seizures [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003200.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/003200.htm>]



Absence seizure [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000696.htm>]

Bilateral tonic-clonic seizure [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000695.htm>]

Convulsions - first aid - series [https://medlineplus.gov/ency/presentations/100212_1.htm]

CPK isoenzymes test [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003504.htm>]

EEG [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003931.htm>]

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

Febrile seizures [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000980.htm>]

Febrile seizures - what to ask your doctor [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000223.htm>]

Focal seizure [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000697.htm>]

Seizures [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003200.htm>]

Related Health Topics

Epilepsy [<https://medlineplus.gov/epilepsy.html>]

National Institutes of Health

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

Other Languages

Find health information in languages other than English [<https://medlineplus.gov/languages/seizures.html>] on *Seizures*

NIH MedlinePlus Magazine

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>]

Understanding Different Kinds of Seizures [<https://magazine.medlineplus.gov/article/understanding-different-kinds-of-seizures>]

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