

Knowing epilepsy

Epilepsy is one of the most common serious neurological conditions in the world. Epilepsy is a condition that affects the brain. When someone has epilepsy, it means they have a tendency to have epileptic seizures. A seizure happens when there is a sudden burst of intense electrical activity in the brain.¹

Epilepsy is usually only diagnosed if a doctor thinks there's a high chance that the person could have more seizures.¹

Epileptic seizures

How a seizure affects you depends on what area of the brain is involved in this intense electrical activity. It can cause changes in behavior, movements or feelings, and in levels of consciousness.²



Focal seizures: manifested with or without motor symptoms and impaired awareness, and occurs in half of childhood seizures.³ These start in an area or network of cells on one side of the brain.⁴



Generalized seizures: manifest with or without motor symptoms, and lead to loss of consciousness.³ These engage or involve networks on both sides of the brain at the onset.⁴

Who is affected?

Epilepsy is one of the most common neurological diseases and affects people of all ages⁵, being more frequent in:⁶



Children **5–9 years**⁶



Adults **> 80 years**⁶

Causes

Etiologies: structural, genetic, infectious, metabolic, immune and unknown.⁷



Congenital abnormalities or genetic conditions with associated brain malformations.⁷



A stroke that restricts the amount of oxygen to the brain.⁷



Brain damage from prenatal or perinatal causes.⁷



An infection of the brain (meningitis, encephalitis...)⁷



A severe head injury.⁷



A brain tumour.⁷

+ Rates of disease



Around

50 million

people worldwide have epilepsy.⁷

IN EUROPE



6 million people have epilepsy.⁸



300,000 are diagnosed each year.⁸



Only 40% of people with epilepsy receive appropriate treatment.⁸



70% of people living with epilepsy could become seizure free with appropriate use of antiseizure medicines.⁷



~100,000 children and adolescents are diagnosed with epilepsy each year in EU.⁹

- Children with seizures can and should lead a normal active life.¹⁰
- Understanding epilepsy, taking responsibility for their medications, and knowing risk behaviors will help teens normalize epilepsy.¹⁰

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