



Information for You from Your Health Care Team

Epilepsy (Ep- a – lep – see): Facts and Figures

Epilepsy is found in about 2,500,000 people in the U.S. and there are about 125,000 that are diagnosed with Epilepsy each year. www.epilepsyfoundation.org

There are some people that have Epilepsy but do not have treatment for it. There are also some people who have this condition but do not know it.

Epilepsy occurs most in children and young adults. Epilepsy can develop at other times.

- One quarter of cases of epilepsy develop before the age of five.
- One half of all cases of epilepsy develop before the age of 25.

Causes of Epilepsy:

There is no known cause of in about 70% of cases of epilepsy.

In the other 30% of cases the following are the most common causes:

- Head trauma- the more severe the injury, the greater the risk of developing epilepsy.
- Brain tumor or stroke.
- Poisoning- including lead poisoning or alcohol poisoning.
- Infection- such as lupus or meningitis. Although less common epilepsy can be caused by, mumps or measles.
- Maternal Injury- an infection that affects the development of the baby during pregnancy.
- Family traits- Epilepsy can be inherited by family. Knowing if your family members have (or have had) epilepsy will be useful information when your doctors cannot find a cause of the epilepsy.

Treatment of epilepsy:

About 85% of seizures can be controlled using the current treatments. There are forms of epilepsy in children that are still difficult to treat. Types of treatment include:

- Medical -Your doctor may prescribe medicine to take to help control your seizures.
- Surgery- When medicine is not working to control your seizures your doctor may suggest an operation, which will help to control the seizures.
- Nutrition- A special high fat, high calorie diet may be helpful in some cases (mostly with children) when other treatment fails.