Seize the Epilepsy DRAGON
#TalkEpilepsyFightEpilepsy

NATIONAL EPILEPSY DAY

17th NOVEMBER

MSN Research for Better Medicines
---- A Public Awareness Initiative ----

The Long View in Epilepsy: Understanding Treatment Continuation and Seizure Outcomes



Dr. Anil Kumar Sahu
Neurologist, Bhubaneswar

Epilepsy care requires patience and regular assessment. Some people respond well to their first treatment, while others need several adjustments before achieving satisfactory seizure control. Studies following people with epilepsy show that treatment outcomes vary, and many achieve seizure freedom with their first or second appropriate medication. However, individual results depend on several factors, including seizure type, underlying cause, and treatment response. Regular follow-up helps doctors assess progress, review side effects, and determine whether changes are needed. Ask your neurologist what improvements to expect, how progress will be measured, and when your treatment plan should be reviewed to support better long-term outcomes.

Are All Your Seizures Being Counted? Recognising Subtle Episodes That May Go Unnoticed



Dr. Rajalaxmi Satapathy
Neurologist, Bhubaneswar

Not every seizure involves falling or shaking. Some episodes may involve brief staring, sudden pauses, unusual sensations, lip smacking, or temporary confusion. These events can easily be missed by family members and sometimes by patients themselves. If subtle episodes go unrecorded, your neurologist may underestimate how often seizures occur and how well treatment is working. Ask family members, friends, or colleagues whether they have noticed unusual behaviour. Maintain a simple seizure diary and mention even brief or uncertain episodes during consultations. A short phone video can help your neurologist greatly.

First Seizure: Experience and How It Changed Perspective



Dr. Ashutosh Rath
Neurologist, Cuttack

A first seizure is often profoundly impactful and can alter one's perspective on life. Patients describe it as surreal, with confusion and fear; the preceding aura brings vulnerability and anxiety, and afterwards come uncertainty about future seizures. Yet this event can also catalyse growth and determination. Patients begin identifying personal triggers and adopting proactive measures, while sharing experiences with friends and family improves understanding and support and reduces isolation. This journey transforms fear into empowerment and resilience. Ultimately, the first seizure is not just a medical event but a turning point toward a better journey of living with epilepsy.

Support Systems: The Role of Family and Friends



Dr. Kumar Bismay
Neurologist, Berhampur

Support systems play a crucial role in living with epilepsy, offering emotional stability and practical assistance. Family and friends provide understanding vital for management. As a neurologist, I encourage open communication so loved ones can offer appropriate support. Educating family dispels myths and reduces stigma, enabling positive engagement. Support includes accompanying patients to appointments or simply listening. Involving family and friends in management strengthens relationships, creates a safety net, and reduces isolation, while celebrating milestones together builds community. Ultimately, their role enhances quality of life, providing the resilience needed to face epilepsy's challenges.

Staying on Track with Epilepsy Care: Why Long-Term Treatment Experience Matters



Dr. Lulup Kumar Sahoo
Neurologist, Bhubaneswar

Epilepsy is often a long-term condition, so treatment may continue for years. Staying on track means taking medicines as prescribed, attending planned reviews, and discussing side effects, costs, or other difficulties openly. Never stop treatment simply because you feel better; only your specialist can decide whether and when changes are safe. Your experience matters because treatment effectiveness and tolerability can vary over time. Report changes in seizure frequency, sleep, mood, or daily activities during consultations. Maintaining regular communication with your healthcare team helps identify problems early, supports treatment continuity, and allows your doctor to refine your care plan according to your needs.

Every Seizure Counts: Why Meaningful Reduction Matters in Epilepsy Care



Dr. Om Mishra
Neurologist, Bhubaneswar

Even when seizures cannot be stopped completely, a meaningful reduction can make an important difference. Fewer seizures may reduce injury risk, improve confidence, and support greater independence in daily life. However, fewer seizures are not the same as complete seizure freedom, and your doctor will continue assessing whether further improvement is possible. Keep a seizure diary recording episode frequency, duration, possible triggers, and recovery time. Share these details with your neurologist during regular reviews. Every episode you report provides useful information for treatment decisions.

First Aid Training: How to Help Someone During a Seizure



Dr. Jashaprajna Praharaj
Neurologist, Cuttack

First aid training for seizures is essential for friends, family, and co-workers of people with epilepsy. As a neurologist, I stress understanding how to respond to ensure the person's safety. Training covers recognizing signs of an impending seizure, providing a safe environment, and knowing when to call for medical help. Education reduces panic caused by misconceptions and fosters calm. Simple actions, like moving objects away and timing the seizure, improve safety, while understanding postictal care builds confidence during recovery. Equipping others creates a safer community, ensuring support during challenging moments and minimizing injury or misunderstanding.

Living with Seizures: How to Adapt Daily Life



Dr. Priyabrata Nayak
Neurologist, Cuttack

Living with epilepsy requires adapting daily routines for safety and well-being. As a neurologist, I stress understanding one's specific condition and triggers. Many people manage stress, keep regular sleep patterns, and adhere to treatment; a structured schedule and relaxation techniques help reduce stress. Safety measures, like having a trusted person nearby during risky activities, are essential, and openly informing friends, family, and colleagues fosters understanding and support. Adapting is empowering, and celebrating small victories, like managing a trigger, reinforces resilience. Ultimately, it means finding balance and an environment promoting safety and fulfilment, so individuals can thrive despite their condition.

Mental Health Impact: Addressing Anxiety, Depression, and Self-Acceptance



Dr. Sachidananda Swain
Neurologist, Bhubaneswar

The mental health impact of epilepsy is significant and often underestimated. Unpredictable seizures leave many with anxiety, depression, and difficulty with self-acceptance. As a neurologist, I often see fear of seizures causing stress and isolation, so patients should recognize these feelings and seek support. Therapy and counselling offer coping tools, while support from friends, family, or support groups aids emotional well-being. Open discussions reduce stigma and encourage seeking help. Mindfulness, physical activity, and creative outlets also help. Addressing these challenges builds resilience, improves quality of life, and helps patients embrace their journey, recognizing their worth beyond the condition.

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Living with Recurrent Seizures: Why Every Breakthrough Episode Deserves Attention



Dr. Shivanarayan Pattanayak
Neurologist, Bhubaneswar

A seizure after a long period without episodes can seem minor, especially if it passes quickly. However, a breakthrough seizure provides important information about your epilepsy. It may point to a missed dose, poor sleep, illness, a new medicine, or a change in the epilepsy itself. Record the date, time, duration, symptoms, and possible triggers, and inform your neurologist promptly. If someone witnesses the episode, their observations may be helpful. Seek urgent medical assistance for a prolonged seizure or repeated seizures without recovery. Never alter your medication independently, as appropriate treatment helps reduce the risk of further episodes.

Common Myths About Epilepsy: What's True and What's Not



Dr. Swagat Mohanty
Neurologist, Cuttack

As a neurologist, I dispel myths to reduce stigma:
1. Myth: People with epilepsy can't lead normal lives. Fact: Many live full lives with management.
2. Myth: Seizures are always dramatic.
Fact: They can be subtle.
3. Myth: Epilepsy is a mental illness. Fact: It is neurological.
4. Myth: People swallow tongues during seizures.
Fact: Impossible; mouth objects cause harm.
5. Myth: Epilepsy is contagious. Fact: It is not infectious.
6. Myth: Only children have epilepsy. Fact: It develops at any age.
7. Myth: Everyone has the same experience. Fact: It affects individuals differently.
8. Myth: You can't drive. Fact: Many with controlled epilepsy can, following regulations.

Beyond the Prescription: What Supports Continuity in Long-Term Epilepsy Treatment?



Dr. Surjyaprakash S. Choudhury
Neurologist, Bhubaneswar

A prescription is only one part of long-term epilepsy care. Treatment continuity also depends on medicine availability, affordability, clear instructions, manageable side effects, and support from family or caregivers. Some people face difficulties accessing specialists, travelling for appointments, or paying for regular medicines. Discuss these challenges openly with your healthcare team rather than missing doses or delaying reviews. Your doctor may suggest nearby clinics, appropriate follow-up arrangements, or available assistance programmes. Keeping an updated medication list and maintaining a regular supply can also help prevent interruptions. Addressing practical barriers early supports consistent treatment, safer care, and better opportunities to maintain seizure control over time.

Raising Awareness: A Journey Through Epilepsy



Dr. Susant Kumar Khilar
Neurologist, Cuttack

Epilepsy, the fourth most common neurological disorder, affects over one crore Indians (5.59–10 per 1,000), with rural (1.9%) exceeding urban (0.6%) prevalence.
It involves recurring, unprovoked seizures from abnormal brain activity, diagnosed after two such seizures or one with high recurrence risk. Sudden electrical surges cause seizures, affecting behaviour and appearance; many causes remain unknown.
Seizures affect safety, relationships, work, and driving, so identifying triggers like stress and lack of sleep is essential. Epilepsy includes various seizure types and syndromes classified by EEG and history.
Stigma creates major challenges; awareness and empathy help individuals celebrate milestones and journey with hope.

Why Regular Check-Ups are Important for Epilepsy



Dr. Rabi Narayan Panda
Neuro Surgeon, Berhampur

As your doctor, I emphasize the importance of regular check-ups for managing epilepsy.
1. Seizure Monitoring: We assess how often and how severely seizures occur, adjusting treatment as needed.
2. Medication Management: AEDs need regular monitoring for effectiveness and side effects; we evaluate blood levels, adjust dosages, and manage adverse reactions.
3. Identifying Comorbidities: We address accompanying issues like anxiety or sleep disorders.
4. Lifestyle Guidance: Personalized diet, exercise, and safety advice reduces injury risk.
5. Education and Support: Patients and families can ask questions and learn about managing epilepsy.
Consistent check-ups enhance treatment effectiveness and quality of life.

Diagnosis Day: The Emotions and Reactions to Receiving Diagnosis



Dr. Tanmaya Padhy
Neurologist, Bhubaneswar

Receiving an epilepsy diagnosis can be life-altering, bringing a whirlwind of emotions: fear of the unknown, relief at finally having answers, and confusion about what lies ahead. It marks a transition from uncertainty to clarity, leaving many overwhelmed yet empowered, motivated to learn about their condition and take control of their health. As a neurologist, I emphasize empathy and support during this time. Open communication with healthcare providers and loved ones eases fears and builds community, so patients should express their feelings and concerns. Diagnosis Day begins a transformative journey of personal growth, where celebrating milestones reinforces resilience and adaptability.

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