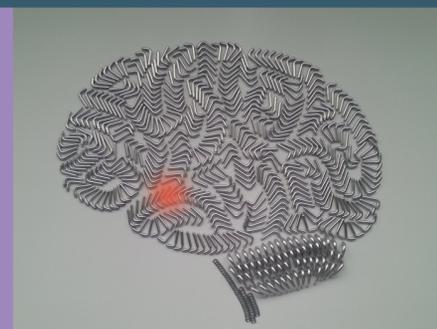


WHAT TYPE OF SEIZURES DO I HAVE?

Seizures can be classified by: (1) where they start, (2) their effect on awareness, and (3) their effect on the body.

FOCAL ONSET

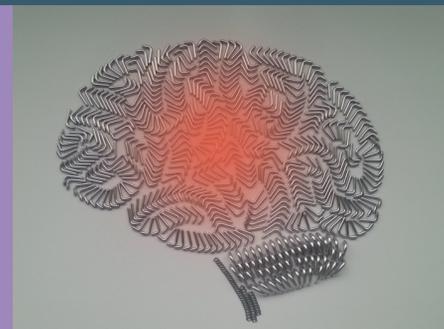
Seizures start in one area of the brain. Only one side of the brain is affected.



1

GENERALIZED ONSET

Seizures start in different areas at the same time. Both sides of the brain are affected.



UNKNOWN ONSET

The origin of seizures is unknown, but eventually may be diagnosed as focal or generalized.



2

Aware

Person is aware of themselves and environment during the seizure

Impaired awareness

Person is unaware of their surroundings during the seizure

3

Motor seizures

The muscles of the body stiffen or weaken temporarily

Non-motor seizures

A change in one of the five senses (taste, smell, sight, hearing, touch)

You may not know what type of seizures you have, and many people have more than one type. To learn more about your seizures and your treatment options, talk to your health care provider.

Visit ontarioepilepsyguidelines.ca
for more information



THE EPILEPSY RESEARCH PROGRAM
OF THE ONTARIO BRAIN INSTITUTE

SEIZURE TYPES

FOCAL: AWARE OR IMPAIRED AWARENESS

Motor

Automatisms
Atonic
Clonic
Epileptic spasms
Hyperkinetic
Myoclonic
Tonic

Non-motor

Autonomic
Behaviour arrest
Cognitive
Emotional
Sensory

Automatisms: Involuntary, repetitive movements, such as lip-smacking

Atonic: Sudden loss of muscle strength (also called drop seizures)

Clonic: Jerking movements on both sides of the body with a loss of consciousness

Epileptic spasms: A series of sudden flexion or extension (or mixed flexion-extension) movements of specific muscles (such as arms and legs pulling into the body)

Hyperkinetic: Involves irregular, complex movements of the limb and trunk, such as rocking or pedaling

Myoclonic: Rapid jerking movements of a muscle or group of muscles

Tonic: Sudden muscle stiffness or contractions

GENERALIZED: IMPAIRED AWARENESS

Motor

Tonic clonic
Tonic
Clonic
Myoclonic
Myoclonic tonic clonic
Myoclonic atonic
Atonic
Epileptic spasms

Non-motor (also called absence)

Typical
Atypical
Myoclonic
Eyelid myoclonia

Autonomic: Involves changes in involuntary functions, such as blood pressure or bowel/bladder function

Behaviour arrest: Movement stops for the duration of the seizure

Cognitive: Involves changes in cognition, such as inability to speak or read, loss of memory, or sense of déjà vu

Emotional: Involves changes in mood or emotion, such as fear, anxiety or laughing

Sensory: Involves the senses, such as hallucinations, strange odors, or a pins and needles sensation

UNKNOWN

Motor

Tonic clonic
Epileptic spasms

Non-motor

Autonomic
Behaviour arrest

Unclassified

Tonic clonic: A seizure with both tonic and clonic phases (convulsions) and a loss of consciousness

Myoclonic tonic clonic: Begins with jerking of the limbs followed by tonic and clonic phases

Myoclonic atonic: A myoclonic seizure followed by an atonic seizure

Typical: Blanking out or staring into space for a few seconds

Atypical: Similar to typical seizures, but may last longer or involve automatisms

Eyelid myoclonia: Rapid and repeated jerks of the eyelids

