# Lennox-Gastaut Syndrome

National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS)

## Source

*National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS). Lennox-Gastaut Syndrome Information Page.*

Lennox-Gastaut syndrome is a severe form of epilepsy. Seizures begin in early childhood, usually before the age of 4 years.

Children, adolescents, and adults with Lennox-Gastaut syndrome have multiple types of seizures that vary among individuals. Common seizure types include:

- tonic seizures (stiffening of the body, upward eye gaze, dilated pupils, and altered breathing patterns)
- atypical absences (staring spells)
- atonic seizures (brief loss of muscle tone, which could cause abrupt falls)
- myoclonic seizures (sudden muscle jerks), and
- generalized tonic-clonic seizures (muscle stiffness and rhythmic jerking).

There may be periods of frequent seizures mixed with relatively seizure-free periods. Although not always present at the onset of seizures, most people with Lennox-Gastaut syndrome experience some degree of impaired intellectual functioning or information processing, along with developmental delays and behavioral disturbances. A particular patten of brain electric activity can be seen using electroencephalogram (EEG). Lennox-Gastaut syndrome can be caused by a variety of conditions, including brain malformations, tuberous sclerosis, perinatal asphyxia, severe head injury, central nervous system infection, and inherited genetic and inherited degenerative or metabolic conditions. In 30-35 percent of individuals, no cause can be found.