# Ohtahara Syndrome

National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS)

## Source

*National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS). Ohtahara Syndrome Information Page.*

Ohtahara syndrome is an uncommon type of epilepsy characterized by hard to control seizures and developmental delays. The disorder affects infants, usually within the first three months of life (most often within the first 10 days) in the form of epileptic seizures. Infants have primarily tonic seizures (stiffening of the muscles, upward eye gaze, dilated pupils, and altered breathing), but may also experience focal seizures (involving only one area or side of the brain), and rarely, myoclonic seizures (involving sudden muscle jerks). Ohtahara syndrome is classically caused by very abnormal brain structure that may be due to damage or abnormal development. It also can be due to metabolic disorders or genetic epilepsy syndromes, although the cause or causes for many cases can't be determined. Recent studies suggest that there is often an identifiable genetic cause of Ohtahara syndrome. Electroencephalography recordings of brain activity of infants with Ohtahara syndrome reveal a characteristic pattern of high voltage abnormal brain activity alternating with periods of very little activity. This pattern is known as "burst suppression."