

Epilepsy Awareness and Seizure First Aid

Promoting Best Practices



What is Epilepsy?

Epilepsy is a disease of the brain that causes seizures and are not caused by temporary underlying medical conditions.¹

A seizure is a short change of normal brain activity and can be dangerous to this individual.

This disease can affect people in many ways, as there are different types and many causes of seizures.²



[1] Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). (2023). Frequently asked questions about epilepsy. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

[2] Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). (2020). Epilepsy fast facts. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Seizure Recognition and First Aid Certification

The Seizure Recognition and First Aid Certification is a training provided by the Epilepsy Foundation.

This certification provides information to increase the knowledge, skills, and confidence of recognizing seizures while being able to safely administer seizure first aid.¹



Seizure First Aid

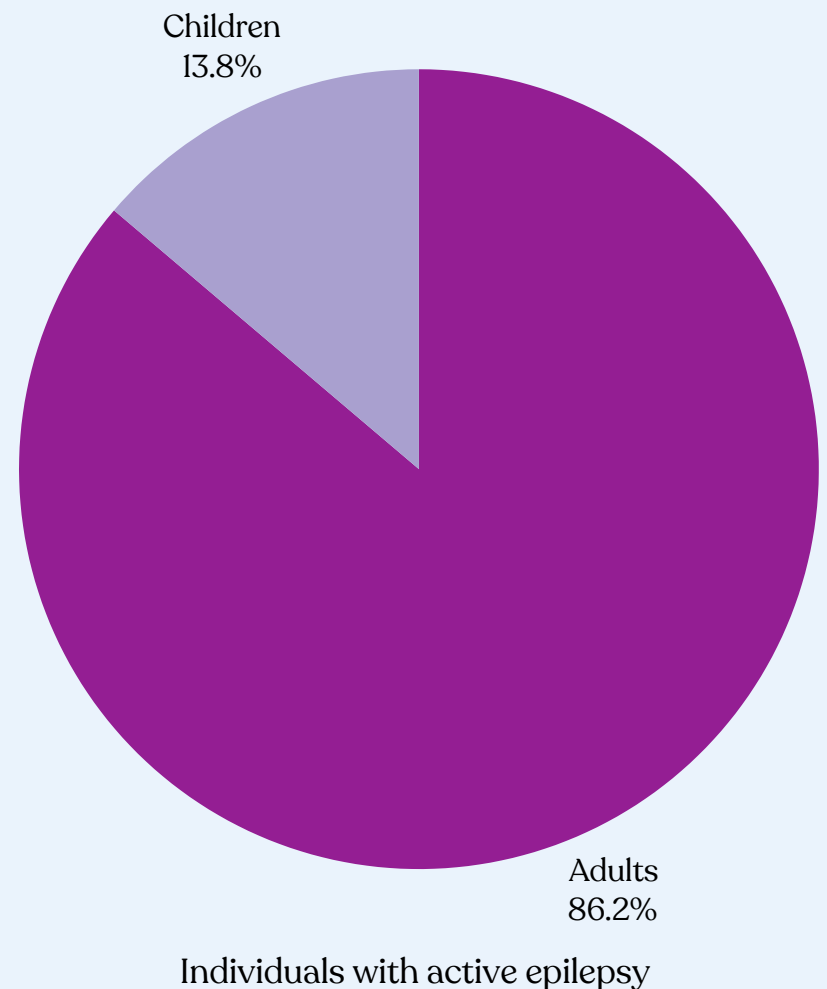


[1] Osborne Shafer, P. (2022). Seizure first aid training and certification. Epilepsy Foundation.

BACKGROUND

In 2015, 1.2% of the population had active epilepsy. This is equivalent to around 3.4 million individuals.

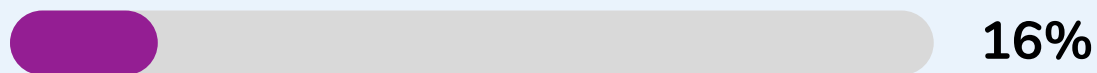
Of the 3.4 million individuals with active epilepsy, 470,000 are children.¹



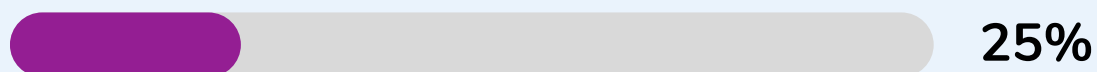
1 in 26 people will develop epilepsy in their lifetime.

HEALTH IMPACT

Seizure Recognition and First Aid training increases knowledge on how to help someone during a seizure episode, which can save lives.¹



Only 16% U.S. adults feel knowledgeable about epilepsy.²



Only 25% of U.S. adults know about seizure first aid.³

Seizure First Aid	
How to help someone having a seizure	
1	STAY with the person until they are awake and alert after the seizure. ✓ Time the seizure ✓ Remain calm ✓ Check for medical ID
2	Keep the person SAFE . ✓ Move or guide away from harm
3	Turn the person onto their SIDE if they are not awake and aware. ✓ Keep airway clear ✓ Loosen tight clothes around neck ✓ Put something small and soft under the head
Call 911 if...	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Seizure lasts longer than 5 minutes▶ Person does not return to their usual state▶ Person is injured, pregnant, or sick▶ Repeated seizures▶ First time seizure▶ Difficulty breathing▶ Seizure occurs in water
Do NOT	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✗ Do NOT restrain.✗ Do NOT put any objects in their mouth.✓ Rescue medicines can be given if prescribed by a health care professional
Learn more: epilepsy.com/firstaid	

[1] Osborne Shafer, P. (2022). Seizure first aid training and certification. Epilepsy Foundation.

[2 & 3] Kobau, R., & Zack, M. M. (2021). Knowledge of and familiarity with epilepsy in U.S. adults: Results from the 2017 ConsumerStyles Online Panel Survey. Epilepsy & behavior : E&B, 114(Pt A), 107535

HEALTH EQUITY

Individuals with epilepsy face more disparities and barriers to care in the United States.¹



More likely to report the inability to afford prescription drugs



Experienced more difficulty finding a doctor



Experienced more transportation barriers to care



More likely in families that have problems paying medical bills

[1] Tian N, Kobau R, Zack MM, Greenlund KJ. Barriers to and Disparities in Access to Health Care Among Adults Aged ≥ 18 Years with Epilepsy – United States, 2015 and 2017. *MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep* 2022;71:697–702.

IOWA DATA

Iowa has **31,400 cases** of active epilepsy.¹



The Epilepsy Foundation of Iowa
supports and mobilizes the epilepsy
community through advocacy, direct
services, educational activities, and
research.²

[1] Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). (2020). Epilepsy fast facts. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

[2] Epilepsy Foundation. (2024). Epilepsy foundation in Iowa. Epilepsy Foundation.

PUBLIC HEALTH ACTION



Improving the knowledge and attitudes about epilepsy must be a public health priority due to stigma around the disorder.¹

- Encourage Seizure Recognition and First Aid certification and training through the Epilepsy Foundation of Iowa.
- Educate family, caregivers, and teachers on seizure recognition and treatment options.
- Increase the awareness of epilepsy among underserved and disparate communities.
- Provide resources on Seizure Recognition and First Aid certification and training for public health practitioners in Iowa.

REFERENCES

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- [2] Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). (2020). Epilepsy fast facts. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <https://www.cdc.gov/epilepsy/about/fast-facts.htm>
- [3] Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). (2023). Epilepsy data and statistics. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <https://www.cdc.gov/epilepsy/data/index.html>
- [4] Osborne Shafer, P. (2022). Seizure first aid training and certification. Epilepsy Foundation. <https://www.epilepsy.com/recognition/first-aid-resources>
- [5] Kobau, R., & Zack, M. M. (2021). Knowledge of and familiarity with epilepsy in U.S. adults: Results from the 2017 ConsumerStyles Online Panel Survey. *Epilepsy & behavior : E&B*, 114(Pt A), 107535. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.yebeh.2020.107535>
- [6] Tian N, Kobau R, Zack MM, Greenlund KJ. Barriers to and Disparities in Access to Health Care Among Adults Aged ≥ 18 Years with Epilepsy – United States, 2015 and 2017. *MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep* 2022;71:697–702. DOI: [http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm7121a1external icon](http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm7121a1external%20icon)
- [7] Epilepsy Foundation. (2019). Specific populations: African Americans. Epilepsy Foundation. <https://www.epilepsy.com/specific-populations/african-americans>
- [8] Epilepsy Foundation. (2024). Epilepsy foundation in Iowa. Epilepsy Foundation. <https://www.epilepsy.com/local/iowa>
- [9] Epilepsy Foundation. (2018). Local office spotlight: epilepsy foundation of Iowa. Epilepsy Foundation News and Stories. <https://www.epilepsy.com/stories/local-office-spotlight-epilepsy-foundation-iowa>