



Lennox-Gastaut Syndrome

What Is Lennox-Gastaut Syndrome?

Lennox-Gastaut syndrome is a rare type of epileptic encephalopathy. Children with the condition will have:

- Several types of seizures.
- Some degree of intellectual disability and developmental delay.
- Abnormal findings on an EEG

Lennox-Gastaut syndrome begins between 3- to 5-years-old. It's a lifelong condition that requires a high level of care.

What Kinds of Seizures Happen in Lennox-Gastaut Syndrome?

There are different seizure types in Lennox-Gastaut syndrome. They can cause a variety of symptoms.

Tonic seizures:

- Cause muscles to suddenly become stiff
- Last about 20 seconds
- Usually involve both sides of the body, but can involve only one side
- Often happen during sleep

Atonic seizures:

- Cause muscles to briefly and unexpectedly go weak or limp (called "drop attacks")
- Last less than 20 seconds
- Can involve the whole body or just certain parts

After the seizure, the child recovers quickly.

Other types:

- Atypical absence seizures: staring spells with blinking, smacking or chewing, rubbing hands together
- Myoclonic seizures: brief muscle twitches or jerks in the neck, shoulders, upper arms and face
- Tonic-clonic seizures: convulsions with rhythmic jerks, rigid muscles, loss of consciousness and eyes rolling back

What Causes Lennox-Gastaut Syndrome?

Lennox-Gastaut syndrome can be caused by multiple conditions. For example, early brain injury from infection or trauma, brain malformations, genetic mutations, etc. Sometimes, it has no clear cause.

How Is Lennox-Gastaut Syndrome Diagnosed?

A pediatric neurologist (a doctor who treats brain, spine, and nervous system problems) can diagnose the condition by doing tests such as:

- EEG
- VEEG, or video electroencephalography (EEG with video recording) to better understand the seizure types a child has
- MRI

How Is Lennox-Gastaut Syndrome Treated?

Seizures in Lennox-Gastaut syndrome are typically drug-resistant. Other treatments include VNS (vagus nerve stimulation), ketogenic diet and epilepsy surgery (callosotomy).

How Can Parents Help?

Caring for a child with Lennox-Gastaut syndrome can be challenging. Work with your child's care team to set up medical visits, therapies, and a treatment plan that provides your child with a good quality of life.

Because it could lead to a tonic-clonic seizure, make sure that you and other adults and caregivers (family members, babysitters, teachers, coaches, etc.) know what to do during a seizure. Your doctor may prescribe an emergency

medicine to give if your child has a long seizure or many seizures in a short amount of time. Be sure to ask your doctor about a seizure rescue plan for your child. Your child may need to wear a helmet to prevent head injury during seizures.

What Else Should I Know?

If your child has epilepsy, your doctor and the care team can answer questions and offer support. They also might be able to recommend a local support group. Online organizations can help too, such as:

- [Epilepsy Foundation](#)
- [CDC – Managing Epilepsy](#)