State-of-the-art Evaluation, Diagnosis and Treatment for Epilepsy and Seizure Disorders

We accept most insurance plans, including Medicare, Medicaid and Managed Care Plans.

What Is Epilepsy?
Epilepsy is a neurological disorder causing recurrent seizures. The seizures may consist of uncontrolled jerking movements, loss of consciousness, staring spells, involuntary movements or periods of confusion.

Epilepsy affects about 3 million Americans (approximately 1% of the population), according to the Centers for Disease Control, with 125,000 new cases diagnosed every year.

Many people think epilepsy is a childhood disease, but it can develop at any time of life. There is a high incidence of epilepsy in people over 50.

What Causes Epilepsy?
In many people with epilepsy, no cause can be identified. Risk factors include:

- Head Trauma/Injury
- Stroke
- Brain Tumors
- Infections such as Meningitis or Encephalitis
- Abnormalities of Brain Development
- Genetic Conditions

Our Mission
We believe that every person with epilepsy deserves comprehensive and individualized care. Our goal is to help our patients achieve seizure freedom without side effects and lead healthy, independent lives.

About Us
The SUNY Downstate Comprehensive Epilepsy Center provides a multi-disciplinary approach to the complex needs of adults and children with epilepsy and seizures.

As the only Comprehensive Epilepsy Center in Brooklyn and Queens, we boast a team of fellowship-trained and board-certified specialists in both adult and pediatric epilepsy. Our new 8-bed Epilepsy Monitoring Unit (EMU) facilitates rapid diagnosis and optimal treatment for our patients. A comprehensive surgical evaluation is available to patients whose seizures cannot be completely controlled with medication. Epilepsy surgery can often provide seizure freedom without loss of brain function in carefully selected patients.

Comprehensive Care Includes:

- Epilepsy Specialist Evaluation and Treatment
- Streamlined Access to Epilepsy Nurses and Physicians
- EEG
- Video-EEG
- Imaging Studies: MRI, PET, MRS (MR-Spectroscopy)
- Neuropsychological Testing
- Wada Testing
- Electrocoagulation
- Epilepsy Surgery

To refer a patient to the Epilepsy Center or Monitoring Unit for evaluation, please fax your request to (718) 270-4711 or call (718) 270-2959.
Our primary objective in treating epilepsy is seizure freedom. Epilepsy medications are the mainstay of treatment, but there are other approaches as well. Different types of epilepsy surgery are very effective in certain patients. A special high fat and low carbohydrate “ketogenic” diet can be effective in some children with severe forms of epilepsy.

Surgery

For carefully selected patients whose seizures are not controlled with medication, we offer:

- Vagus Nerve Stimulation (VNS)
- Anterior Temporal Lobectomy
- Focal Brain Resection
- Corpus Callosotomy
- Hemispherectomy

Prior to surgery, tests are performed both to determine where the seizures originate, and also to determine where speech, thinking and memory functions are located, in order to avoid damage to these areas.

Wada Test

This test combines neuroimaging and neuropsychological testing to identify which hemisphere is most responsible for language and memory. It is also known as an intracarotid sodium amobarbital test.

Intracranial Electrode Placement

With surgical implantation of electrodes directly on or in the brain, doctors can precisely localize where seizures begin, so that minimal resections can be made.

Cortical Mapping

Cortical mapping is a highly specialized test in which brief electrical stimuli are used to precisely localize the cortex responsible for critical brain functions, such as speech/language, motor control and sensation.