

One-a-day anti-seizure drug shows promise for people with epilepsy

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(HealthDay)—A once-daily epilepsy drug may control seizures just as

well as a twice-daily drug, researchers report.

Their preliminary study compared the once-a-day drug eslicarbazepine [acetate](#) (Aptiom) to the twice-daily drug carbamazepine (Tegretol, Carbatrol) for more than 800 people newly diagnosed with [partial seizures](#), which originate in one area of the brain.

After six months, 71 percent of those taking eslicarbazepine and 76 percent of those taking carbamazepine were seizure-free.

After one year, 65 percent of those taking eslicarbazepine and 70 percent of those taking carbamazepine were seizure-free, said the team led by Dr. Elinor Ben-Menachem, of Gothenburg University in Sweden.

The study was funded by Portuguese drug maker BIAL-Portela & Ca., and will be presented April 19 at the American Academy of Neurology's annual meeting, in Vancouver.

"Seizure control is crucial. A once-a-day drug may help people stick to their [medication](#) schedule," Ben-Menachem said in an academy news release.

"Memory issues, fatigue or a complicated medication schedule can all interfere with a person taking their seizure-control medications on a regular basis," she added, "so having a once-daily option for patients, especially when they are newly diagnosed and still learning to manage the disease, may be beneficial."

An epilepsy expert in the United States agreed.

"The study shows eslicarbazepine to be as effective as the older, more tried-and-true [drug](#), carbamazepine, from which it is derived," said Dr. Sean Hwang, an attending neurologist at Northwell Health's

Comprehensive Epilepsy Care Center in Great Neck, N.Y.

"A longer-acting compound, with once daily dosing, may make it easier for patients to comply with their medication regimen, avoid missed doses, and reduce their risk for breakthrough seizures," he said.

More information: The American Academy of Family Physicians has more about [epilepsy](#).

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