

# Anxiety and depression are common in people with epilepsy

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Generalized 3 Hz spike and wave discharges in a child with childhood absence epilepsy. Credit: Wikipedia.

An analysis of published studies found that in individuals with epilepsy, there is a 20.2 percent prevalence of anxiety disorders and a 22.9 percent prevalence of depression. Investigators also found no differences in the prevalence of either depression or anxiety based on the severity of illness.

Improving our understanding, detection, and management of both [anxiety](#) and depressive disorders in people with [epilepsy](#) is crucial to providing optimal care for affected patients.

"It is often thought that depression is more common than anxiety in people with epilepsy. Our results suggest that in clinical practice depression is more often diagnosed than [anxiety disorders](#); however, in studies using structured interviews, depression and anxiety were equally common," said Dr. Louise Sharpe, co-author of the *Epilepsia* analysis.

"This suggests that people with epilepsy who have anxiety may be under-diagnosed in practice. We need to understand more about anxiety in epilepsy so that it can be identified more readily and effective treatments can be developed."

**More information:** Amelia J. Scott et al. Anxiety and depressive disorders in people with epilepsy: A meta-analysis, *Epilepsia* (2017). [DOI: 10.1111/epi.13769](https://doi.org/10.1111/epi.13769)

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