

More than a third of patients do not respond to antiepileptics

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(HealthDay)—More than one-third of patients with newly diagnosed

epilepsy do not respond to treatment with antiepileptic drugs (AEDs), according to a study published online Dec. 26 in *JAMA Neurology*.

Zhibin Chen, Ph.D., from the University of Melbourne in Australia, and colleagues conducted a longitudinal observational cohort study to assess long-term outcomes in 1,795 [patients](#) with newly diagnosed and treated [epilepsy](#). Patients were followed for a minimum of two years or until death.

The researchers found that 63.7 percent of patients had been seizure-free for the previous year or longer at the end of the study period. Overall, 86.8 percent of those achieving one-year seizure freedom were taking monotherapy, and 89.9 percent had achieved seizure control with the first or second AED regimens. A total of 50.5 percent of the patient pool remained seizure-free for one year or longer with the initial AED; if this AED failed, the likelihood of [seizure](#) freedom was increased by 11.6 and 4.4 percent with the second and third regimens, respectively. With subsequent AEDs, only 2.12 percent of patients attained optimal [seizure control](#). The odds of not responding to treatment for each subsequent medication regimen were increased 1.73 times for epilepsy that was not successfully controlled with the first AED.

"Despite the availability of many new AEDs with differing mechanisms of action, overall outcomes in newly diagnosed epilepsy have not improved," the authors write.

Several authors disclosed financial ties to the pharmaceutical industry.

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