

Many epilepsy patients take drug combinations that interact

February 7 2018



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

In an *Epilepsia* analysis of 2008-2010 Medicare claims data, one in four older Americans with new-onset epilepsy and more than one-third with prevalent epilepsy received a combination of antiepileptic drugs and non-epilepsy drugs that could interact to alter the effectiveness of the non-epilepsy drugs. Also, more than 1 in 5 patients received a drug combination that could alter the effect of the antiepileptic drugs and potentially cause toxicity.

Having interacting drug pair combinations was more likely for those with [comorbid conditions](#) and those eligible for a low-income subsidy.

"Avoidance of interacting [antiepileptic drugs](#) is feasible for most persons because of the availability of newer drugs," the authors wrote.

More information: Edward Faught et al, Risk of pharmacokinetic interactions between antiepileptic and other drugs in older persons and factors associated with risk, *Epilepsia* (2018). [DOI: 10.1111/epi.14010](https://doi.org/10.1111/epi.14010)

Provided by Wiley

Citation: Many epilepsy patients take drug combinations that interact (2018, February 7) retrieved 25 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2018-02-epilepsy-patients-drug-combinations-interact.html>

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