

11 percent of stroke survivors struggle with epilepsy

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(HealthDay)—More than one in 10 stroke survivors develop epilepsy,

and the greater the brain damage caused by stroke, the higher the risk of seizures, a new study reports.

Epilepsy is a chronic neurological condition marked by recurrent, [unprovoked seizures](#), muscle spasms or convulsions.

Researchers analyzed data from 450 stroke survivors in the United Kingdom and found that 11 percent developed [epilepsy](#) after their stroke.

The study found that those who developed epilepsy had twice the amount of brain damage as those who did not develop seizures. Those who developed epilepsy were an average of 44 years old, compared with an average age of 56 for those who did not develop epilepsy. But the study did not prove that more [brain damage](#) causes epilepsy risk to rise.

Brain damage from stroke tends to be more extensive in younger people, putting them at higher risk for epilepsy, the study authors said.

The findings were to be resented Friday at the American Epilepsy Society annual meeting, in Houston. Research presented at meetings is considered preliminary until published in a peer-reviewed journal.

"Many physicians treating stroke patients don't realize that falls, episodes of confusion and loss of consciousness may be signs of post-stroke epilepsy," said study author Dr. Beate Diehl, a neurologist and clinical neurophysiologist at University College London.

"Post-stroke epileptic seizures can negatively affect [stroke recovery](#) and rehabilitation," Diehl said in a society news release.

Doctors treating [stroke survivors](#) need to know that epilepsy is common in these patients and to be alert for signs of the disorder, the researchers

said.

More information: The U.S. National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke has more on [epilepsy](#).

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