

# What Causes Epilepsy?

There are many causes of epilepsy. For the majority of people with epilepsy (60%), the cause cannot be found. This is sometimes called 'idiopathic' epilepsy. We also know that some genes can cause or predispose a person to develop epilepsy.

For others, some of the causes could include:

- Brain abnormalities that occur in utero (before birth)
- Low oxygen during birth
- Brain injury, such as after a traumatic head injury
- Brain infection, such as meningitis or encephalitis
- Stroke, which can lead to scarring of the brain
- Brain tumour, either benign or malignant
- Neurodegenerative diseases, such as Alzheimer's disease
- Another condition which increases the likelihood of developing epilepsy, such as Cerebral Palsy or Down syndrome.

Epilepsy is not contagious (you cannot 'catch it').

