



Serving Persons  
Affected by Epilepsy

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# hotline

## Study Analyzes Cost-Effectiveness of AEDs Older AEDs deemed more "cost-effective"

Newer drugs used to treat the most common forms of epilepsy are more expensive than older drugs, but produce similar health benefits, according to a study by researchers at the University of York in the United Kingdom. The research focused on the cost-effectiveness of anti-epileptic drugs (AEDs) licensed for adults in three specific situations.

The study compared three situations: monotherapy (use of only one AED) for newly diagnosed patients, monotherapy for people with difficult-to-control epilepsy, and combination therapy (use of more than one AED) for people with difficult-to-control epilepsy. The analysis separately considered partial and generalized seizures.

The analysis showed that two older drugs, valproate and carbamazepine, are likely to be more cost-effective than newer drugs for newly diagnosed patients with partial seizures. Valproate was shown to be most cost-effective for newly diagnosed patients with generalized seizures. For some other groups of patients, such as those who did not respond well to a single drug, newer drugs such as topiramate, oxcarbazepine, or lamotrigine, were cost-effective. For example, oxcarbazepine was found to be probably the most cost-effective add-on therapy for people with difficult-to-control epilepsy, and add-on topiramate was more cost-effective than monotherapy for people with difficult-to-control generalized seizures. The study was performed on behalf of the National Institute of Health and Clinical Excellence (UK) and published in the journal *Medical Decision Making*.   
*EPILEPSY ACTION Editor's Note: One reason newer AEDs are more expensive is that manufacturers are still recovering R & D expenses from the development and testing stages of the drug.*

## Wichita Gets Neurostimulator Study

Via Christi Epilepsy Center One of 3 Midwest Centers to Participate

The Via Christi Comprehensive Epilepsy Center (VCCEC) continues to bring exciting, cutting edge neuroscience research treatment to Wichita, Kansas.

Via Christi is 1 of just 3 hospitals in the Midwest invited to participate in this pivotal nationwide epilepsy research study involving the innovative investigative device known as the Responsive Neurostimulator (RNS).

The investigational epilepsy device is now undergoing study in 28 hospitals in the US. The purpose of the clinical investigation is to assess the safety and to demonstrate that the RNS system is effective as an add-on (adjunctive) therapy in reducing the frequency of seizures in individuals 18 years of age or older with partial onset seizures (those that start from one or two areas of the brain) that are refractory to two or more antiepileptic medications. Study participation is expected to last approximately two to three years. Participants in the trial will continue to receive their epilepsy medications.



The RNS is implanted in the head and connected to one or two leads (wires containing electrodes) that are implanted in or on the brain near the patient's seizure focus. RNS is designed to continuously monitor brain electrical activity from the electrodes and, after identifying the "signature" of a seizure's onset, deliver brief and mild electrical stimulation intended to normalize brain activity before the patient experiences seizure symptoms. This type of treatment is called responsive stimulation, but it is not yet known if it will work for the treatment of epilepsy.

Via Christi Comprehensive Epilepsy Center in Wichita, Kansas, is recruiting the following patients:

- Adult epilepsy patients ages 18-70
- Have 3 or more partial seizures per month
- Failed at least 2 seizure medications



Via Christi  
Comprehensive Epilepsy Center

Four Wichita physicians—Dr. Kore Liow, Medical Director of the VCCEC, Dr. Andrew Massey and Dr. Lyle Baade of the University of Kansas School of Medicine-Wichita, and Dr. Nazih Moufarrij—will play an important role in this pivotal national study.

By bringing this innovative research study to our Midwest region, Via Christi continues to display the vision and leadership to make Wichita a leading neuroscience center for the Midwest.



To learn more about enrolling: contact Study Coordinator, Toni Sadler, at 316-268-8500; 1-800-362-0070, x8500 or [toni\\_sadler@via-christi.org](mailto:toni_sadler@via-christi.org).



## Adult Epilepsy Support Group

Meets Second Tuesday of Month at 6:30 PM  
2919 W. 2nd Street, Wichita (943-2453)

**Feb. 21st: Stress and Seizure Triggers**

*NOTE: NO Meeting on Feb. 14th due to Saint Valentine's Day. Instead, the group will meet Tuesday, February 21st, at 6:30 PM.*

**March 8th: Depression & Epilepsy: A Common Link**

# Women and Epilepsy

## iVillage Survey Shows Women Are Lacking Information on Epilepsy

More than one million women and girls in the United States are living with seizure disorders.



Women with epilepsy are not getting enough information about the condition and the impact it has on pregnancy, sexual function, weight, menopause and bone health, with all of these topics rated as being of high concern in a survey.

Conducted by the women's online community iVillage, the survey of 440 women taking anti-epileptic drugs (AEDs) also showed that women are not receiving enough education on how their AEDs relate to important female health issues.

Results from the survey show an overall lack of female health knowledge among women—nearly 82% of women indicating they were less than "very knowledgeable" about a broad range of female health issues as they related to epilepsy and AEDs.

Of the women aged under 35 surveyed, 69% said they were concerned about pregnancy and the use of AEDs and 61% have had pregnancy decisions influenced by their epilepsy and treatment. Almost 40% of women said that epilepsy has or will affect their decision to have a child, with the majority citing fears about the child's health and concerns about taking medications while pregnant.

The survey results indicated that neither doctors nor patients are taking the lead in initiating dialogue on the female health issues studied in this survey.

Women initiating the discussion 33% of the time and health care professionals leading the discussion only 20% of the time. The survey reported that discussions about these issues do not take place nearly 50% of the time; even though the majority of women surveyed indicated they wanted more information on sexual function (44%), menopause (53%), weight (61%), and bone health (65%).

Women with epilepsy tend to stay on the same medication for a long period of time, and many women are reluctant to consider changing their medication if their seizures are under control.

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# GLIMMER GROUP

a support group for parents & caregivers

(This group meets quarterly at 2919 West Second Street)

## FIRST QUARTER Meeting

Saturday, FEB 4, 2006 10 AM — Noon

# Survey Says...



Please take a few moments to complete the enclosed survey and return it.

We utilize this information with our funding agencies. Your input is greatly appreciated. Returning the completed survey will be like making a donation to further our programs.

However, there are other important issues to consider beyond seizure control. It is important for women to take the initiative to have an informed discussion with their physician about treatment choices that are right for them in their current stage of life.

Even if women are planning to have a family five years from now, or menopause is ten years away, it is never too soon to discuss how epilepsy and the medications taken to manage seizures might impact their life.

The results show concern about pregnancy, when in fact, with the right treatment and partnership with a physician, it is possible for women with epilepsy to have a healthy pregnancy and child. Clearly, the results indicate women need more information so they should be proactive about initiating discussions about these important female health issues and asking questions of their physician. Conversely, health care professionals also need to take an active role and ensure women are well versed about the impact epilepsy and anti-epileptic drugs can have throughout life. ✚ EPILEPSY ACTION



- YES, I want to receive this FREE monthly newsletter
- Please send me information re: upcoming epilepsy events.

name: \_\_\_\_\_

address: \_\_\_\_\_

city/st/zip: \_\_\_\_\_

email: \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: ERC, 2919 W 2nd St., Wichita, KS 67203 •OR• register by email or phone: [erc@arc-sedgwickcounty.org](mailto:erc@arc-sedgwickcounty.org) ▪ (316) 943-2453

