EPILEPSY NEW ZEALAND
Kia titiro ki te tangata | See the person

Causes

It is very important that the cause of your seizures is properly investigated, as this will help determine the appropriate management and support you may need.

Approximately one-third of seizures in older adults will have no known causes. However, where a cause is identified, some common conditions associated with epilepsy and seizures in the later years include:

Stroke: This is one of the greatest contributors to an epilepsy diagnosis in later years. Epilepsy can arise from damage caused to brain tissue as a result of the stroke. This may disrupt the normal functioning of the brain, resulting in seizures.

Acquired Brain Injury (ABI): Similar to a stroke, damage to brain tissue, or the scar tissue following an ABI may predispose someone to developing epilepsy. ABI is an umbrella term that refers to injury to the brain following a range of events, including stroke, lack of oxygen to the brain and degenerative neurological conditions. A brain injury that arises following an accident or blow to the head is termed a Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI).

Tumours: Tumours in the brain can disrupt normal electrical and chemical functions, resulting in seizures.

Degenerative conditions: This typically refers to dementia conditions, such as Alzheimer's disease, which affect brain tissue and functioning.

© 2026 Epilepsy NZ