



Photosensitive Occipital Lobe Epilepsy

What Is Photosensitive Occipital Lobe Epilepsy?

Kids with photosensitive occipital lobe epilepsy have seizures that usually start between 4- and 17-years-old and are often induced. This type of epilepsy syndrome is more frequent in girls than boys. Prognosis is variable, ranging from only a few seizures and remission after a few years to patients that do not outgrow photic-induced seizures throughout life.

What Happens During Photosensitive Occipital Lobe Epilepsy Seizures?

The seizures in photosensitive occipital lobe epilepsy are focal seizures that can be triggered by flickering lights.

The seizures usually last only a few minutes. During one, a child will have:

- Visual symptoms (vision of bright lights or blurring)
- Head and eye deviation

What Causes Photosensitive Occipital Lobe Epilepsy?

Doctors don't know what causes photosensitive occipital lobe epilepsy. It is probably genetic, and some kids may have a relative who has idiopathic generalized epilepsy. No specific gene has been identified yet.

How Is Photosensitive Occipital Lobe Epilepsy Diagnosed?

Doctors diagnose the condition based on the description of the seizures, the child's age and development, and results from an EEG.

Patients with seizures might need to see a pediatric neurologist. Other tests done can include:

- VEEG, or video electroencephalography (EEG with video recording)

- MRI

How Is Photosensitive Occipital Lobe Epilepsy Treated?

Those who have recurrent seizures generally need to take medicine to stop them. Many pediatric neurologists use antiseizure medicine. If a child hasn't had a seizure in more than 2 years, the neurologist will do an EEG to see when and if the child can stop taking the medicine.

How Can Parents Help?

If your child takes medicine, make sure you give it exactly as directed. You can also help your child avoid known seizure triggers such as flickering lights.

Because it could lead to a tonic-clonic seizure, make sure that you and other adults and caregivers (family members, babysitters, teachers, coaches, etc.) know what to do if one happens. Your doctor may prescribe an emergency medicine to give if your child has a long seizure or many seizures in a short amount of time. Be sure to ask your doctor about a seizure rescue plan for your child.

What Else Should I Know?

If your child has epilepsy, reassure them that they're not alone. Your doctor and the care team can answer questions and offer support. They also might be able to recommend a local support group. Online organizations can help too, such as:

- [Epilepsy Foundation](#)
- [CDC – Managing Epilepsy](#)