

Epilepsy & Hormones

Hormones are chemical messengers that help regulate growth, mood, sleep, metabolism, and reproduction. Because hormones also interact with brain cells, shifts in hormone levels can sometimes change brain excitability, which can affect how likely seizures are to happen.

Managing Hormones & Seizures

Track seizures alongside menstrual cycles, stress levels, sleep, and medication timing

Discuss pattern changes early as small adjustments can make a big difference

Seek evaluation for possible endocrine or reproductive disorders when symptoms arise

What About Stress?

Stress disrupts the body's hormone systems, especially cortisol, the primary stress hormone. Changes in cortisol levels have been linked to shifts in seizure activity and frequency.

Seizure Meds & Hormones

Anti-seizure medications can influence reproductive hormones, weight, and menstrual regularity

Some medications may reduce the effectiveness of hormonal birth control

Collaborative care between neurology and gynecology/endocrinology is often helpful

Life Stages that Influence Seizures

Puberty, pregnancy, and menopause are all transitions that can shift hormone levels in ways that affect seizure frequency.

Medication review or close monitoring may be required.

Why Hormones Matter

Hormones influence mood, sleep, metabolism, and brain excitability

Shifts in hormone levels can change how likely seizures are to occur

Many people with epilepsy notice seizure patterns that align with hormonal changes



Hormones & Seizure Patterns

Some people experience seizure changes tied to menstrual cycles (catamenial patterns)

Estrogen and progesterone fluctuations can raise or lower seizure thresholds

Tracking cycles can help identify patterns and guide treatment adjustments

Hormones in Males

Hormones matter for men too. Testosterone can influence energy, mood, sexual function, and bone health.

Data Matters

Track noticeable changes (sleep, stress, medication timing, cycle timing if relevant) and bring that data to neurology visits.

When to Talk with Your Doctor

If you notice seizure clustering around certain days of the month

If you experience new mood changes, cycle irregularities, or symptoms of hormonal imbalance

If you're planning pregnancy or navigating a major hormonal transition