

Dr. Zubin Shah

MBBS, MD, DM Neurology

Post-Doctoral Fellowship in Epilepsy

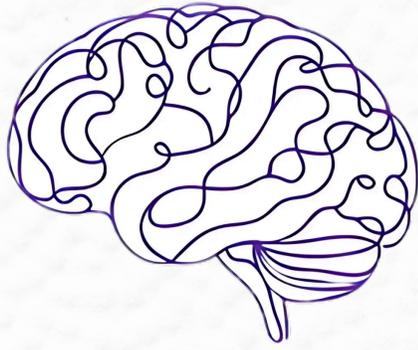
Consultant Neurologist & Epileptologist



Dr. Zubin Shah, an expert in epilepsy, is dedicated to providing precise diagnosis and individualized treatment plans. With specialized training in epilepsy, he spends considerable time diagnosing and observing patients to ensure the correct diagnosis. His approach combines accurate diagnosis, careful tapering of medications, and, when necessary, surgical intervention to help patients live seizure-free lives.

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Your Path to Seizure-Free Living



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What is epilepsy?

Epilepsy - also known as a seizure disorder is a brain condition that causes recurring seizures. It is estimated that there are more than 10 million persons with epilepsy (PWE) in India. Its prevalence is about 1% in our population.

Symptoms

Seizure symptoms vary depending on the type of seizure. Because epilepsy is caused by certain activity in the brain, seizures can affect any brain process. Seizure symptoms may include:

- Behaviour arrest.
- A staring spells.
- Posturing of limbs.
- Jerking movements of the arms and legs.
- Psychological symptoms such as fear, anxiety or Deja vu.

Understanding Seizures

Types of Seizures:

- **Focal Seizures:** Originate in one part of the brain.
- **Generalized Seizures:** Involve the entire brain.

When to see a doctor?

Seek immediate medical help if any of the following occurs with a seizure:

- The seizure lasts more than five minutes.
- Breathing or consciousness doesn't return after the seizure stops.
- A second seizure follows immediately.
- You have a high fever.
- You're pregnant.
- You have diabetes.
- You've injured yourself during the seizure.
- You continue to have seizures even though you've been taking anti-seizure medicine.

What are treatment modalities for epilepsy?

Having a single seizure doesn't mean you have epilepsy. Hence most of the times you don't require any treatment. Anti-seizure medications (ASM) is standard modality of treatment once diagnosis of epilepsy is confirmed by experience Neurologist/Epileptologist.

However, if seizures don't respond to antiepileptic medications they should be evaluated and surgical option is given. If surgery does not appear to be feasible option after evaluation palliative procedures should be considered.

What is drug resistant epilepsy?

Drug-resistant epilepsy (DRE) is defined as failure to achieve seizure freedom despite adequate trials of two appropriately chosen and well-tolerated antiseizure medications (ASM).

Around 30% of people with epilepsy have drug-resistant epilepsy. After the failure of first two antiseizure medications chances of the success rate of medical management is low (12.5 to 22 %). Hence surgical option should be considered in patients with drug resistant epilepsy.

Why to go for epilepsy surgery?

If your seizures are controlled by one or two medications, there is no need for surgery. However, if you have to take two or more than two medications and you continue to have seizures, surgery is a rational choice for following reasons.

1) Drug-resistant epilepsy is associated with higher rates of morbidity like:

- Cognitive decline
- Memory impairment
- Depression
- Loss of independence (you can't drive, swim or engage in sports activity)
- Poor quality of life. (Loss of employment, school dropped out)
- Social stigma
- In addition to that patients with Drug-resistant epilepsy have 5 to 10 times higher rates of sudden unexpected death in epilepsy (SUDEP), accidents, and suicide compared to healthy individuals.

2) Epilepsy medications have many side effects which include bone problems, weight gain, hair loss, mood problems, cognitive decline and loss of memory. More medications you take, more chances of cognitive decline over time period.

3) Even financially, if you are on two medications, your monthly maintenance comes to around 6000-7000 per month i.e. 72,000-84000 annually. The cost of epilepsy surgery with all investigations, hospitalization is close to around 3.5 lakhs

What is pre-surgical evaluation for epilepsy surgery?

Once you are categorized as drug resistant epilepsy and being considered for epilepsy surgery, you will have to undergo pre-surgical evaluation consist of four main domains: Long term video EEG (48-72 hours), Specialized MRI Brain, PET scan & Neuropsychological evaluation. In pre-surgical evaluation, we decide the exact parts of your brain which is responsible for epilepsy and a team of doctor specialists from various related fields meet together to discuss and reach a consensus about the type of surgery you will need.

What are improvement chances for epilepsy surgery?

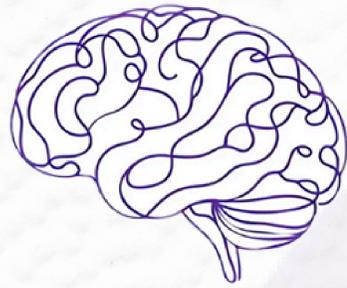
Chances of seizure control depend on many variables and it varies between 50-90%. If there is tumor or malformation or localized focal area which could be removed completely, then 90% patient achieves freedom from epilepsy. However, outcome is in the magnitude of 50% with palliative surgeries. Outcome typically depends on the responsible pathology. If MRI Brain shows some localized lesion which could be removed, then 9 out of 10 people can achieve seizure freedom and almost 6 out of 10 patients can be off medicine.

What is cost for pre-surgical evaluation & epilepsy surgery?

Approximate cost of hospitalization and pre-surgical evaluation is approximately 50,000-60,000, and further cost of surgical treatment is approximately 2.5-3 lac. making total of 3-3.5 lac. However, it varies from case to case basis.

Life with Epilepsy and After Surgery

- **Life with Epilepsy:** Living with epilepsy can be challenging for both patients and their families. It can affect independence, leading to limitations in daily activities such as driving or swimming. Social stigma, cognitive decline, and emotional difficulties may also arise, impacting quality of life.
- **Life After Surgery:** Epilepsy surgery offers a chance for a seizure-free life, reduced medication dependence, and improved mental and physical well-being. Many patients regain their independence, return to work or school, and enjoy a better quality of life.



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