

Mersey Region

Epilepsy Association



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causes of epilepsy

Among the identifiable causes are those which are symptomatic. These can occur as a result of injury to the head, infections such as encephalitis or meningitis, malformation of the brain, degeneration of the brain or metabolic (biochemical) disorder as a result of low blood glucose, low calcium level or the effect of drugs, particularly alcohol. One further cause of brain damage is the development of a tumour. In older people the cause of the onset of epilepsy can be a stroke.

Hereditary factors can be important since epilepsy can be genetically inherited. In the majority of cases however, direct inheritance probably only plays a limited role.

When the cause is unknown, epilepsy is known as 'cryptogenic' and applies to approximately 60-70% of all epilepsy.