

**The following facts must be made available to audience members  
during each performance of  
*The World of Epilepsy: A Caregivers Perspective***

**Epilepsy Fast Facts\***

<http://www.cdc.gov/epilepsy/basics/fast-facts.htm>

### **About Epilepsy**

- **Epilepsy is a disorder of the brain that causes seizures.** These seizures are not caused by a temporary underlying medical condition such as a high fever.
- **Epilepsy can affect people in very different ways.** This is because there are many causes and many different kinds of seizures. Some people may have multiple types of seizures or other medical conditions in addition to epilepsy. These factors play a major role in determining both the severity of the person's condition and the impact it has on his or her life.
- **The way a seizure looks depends on the type of seizure a person is experiencing.** Some seizures can look like staring spells. Other seizures can cause a person to collapse, shake, and become unaware of what's going on around them.
- **Epilepsy can be caused by different conditions that affect a person's brain.** Many times the cause is unknown. Some causes include:
  - Stroke
  - Brain tumor
  - Traumatic brain injury or head injury
  - Central nervous system infection

**A person with epilepsy is not contagious and cannot give epilepsy to another person.**

### **Epilepsy in the United States**

#### **History of Epilepsy**

- According to the latest estimates, about 1.8% of adults aged 18 years or older have had a diagnosis of epilepsy or seizure disorder.<sup>1</sup>
  - When applied to the 2013 population, this is about **4.3 million** adults.<sup>2</sup>
- According to the latest estimates, about 1% of children aged 0-17 years have had a diagnosis of epilepsy or seizure disorder.<sup>3b</sup>
  - When applied to the 2013 population, this is about **750,000** children aged 0-17 years.<sup>2</sup>
- When counting both children and adults, about **5.1 million** people in the United States have had a diagnosis of epilepsy or a seizure disorder.<sup>1-3</sup>

## Active Epilepsy

- According to the latest estimates, about 1% of adults aged 18 years or older have active epilepsy.<sup>1</sup>
  - When applied to the 2013 population, this is about **2.4 million** adults.<sup>2</sup>
- According to the latest estimates, about 0.6% of children aged 0-17 years have active epilepsy.<sup>3</sup>
  - When applied to the 2013 population, this is about **460,000** children aged 0-17 years.<sup>2</sup>
- When counting both children and adults, about **2.9 million** people in the United States have active epilepsy.<sup>1-3</sup>

The total indirect and direct cost of epilepsy in the United States is estimated to be \$15.5 billion yearly. This estimate is based on a reported cost of \$12.5 billion in 1995 converted to 2004 dollar value using Bureau of Labor Statistics data.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>a</sup> History of epilepsy is defined as adults, participating in the 2010 National Health Interview Survey (NHIS), who responded “yes” to ever having been told by a doctor or other health professional that they had epilepsy or a seizure disorder.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>b</sup> Parents participating in the 2007 National Survey of Children’s Health were asked if a doctor or health care provider ever told them that their child had epilepsy or seizure disorder, and if so, if their child currently had epilepsy or seizure disorder.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>c</sup> Active epilepsy is defined as adults, participating in the 2010 NHIS, who reported a history of epilepsy or seizure disorder and either were currently taking medication to control it, or had one or more seizures in the past year, or both.<sup>1</sup>

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