

DAVID B. BURKHOLDER: There are several risks of having continued seizures and having poor seizure control over time. The one that we most often combat, I think, is just impact in quality of life.

JEFFREY W. BRITTON: Seizures that are not controlled with medication treatment can have significant effects on a person's quality of life. It affects employment, driving, interpersonal relationships, family dynamics significantly. Epilepsy affects the whole family, all people who care about the patient, not just the patient themselves. When seizures are not controlled, it affects many people.

Uncontrolled seizures also run the risk of injury. Burns can occur during seizures. Patients can break bones, develop compression fractures of the spine, dislocation of the shoulder. Those can occur- falls, serious falls with lacerations, and other injuries can also occur.

And then, finally, seizures that are uncontrolled pose a risk of sudden death in patients with epilepsy. The phenomena SUDEP can occur and can occur up to 20 times greater in patients with seizures compared to those without and those who are uncontrolled with their medication treatment.

WILLIAM TATUM: The reason uncontrolled seizures are so important-- and it happens about a third of the time that we have people that have seizures that begin in one focal part of the brain and then spread to a varying degree that can translate to sudden feelings that are abnormal for that individual all the way to a convulsion where somebody has a generalized tonic-clonic or grand mal seizure-- and you can imagine that if there is a sudden, unpredictable loss of consciousness and somebody falls to the ground.

So it's very important, when you have uncontrolled epilepsy, to seek attention to try to get them controlled to eliminate that disability.