

# Epilepsy Among Older Tasmanians



Epilepsy is up to **8 times more common** in people with other health conditions such as depression, dementia, heart disease and arthritis, which further affects seizure outcome and quality of life.

## DIAGNOSIS & SIGNS

Recent Tasmanian research reveals **an increasing number of older people are being diagnosed with epilepsy.**

**It is harder to diagnose epilepsy as we age,** sometimes resulting in a misdiagnosis of stroke, transient ischemic attack (mini stroke), dementia, and altered mental status among others.

Signs that an older person may have epilepsy can include the loss or impairment of consciousness, or frequent falls with no recollection of how they happened.

**Elderly people with epilepsy have increased risks** of seizure frequency, fractures, social isolation and cognitive concerns such as impaired perception, memory, judgement and reasoning.

**Medications may also have different effects** in relation to absorption and side effects.

## REMEMBER

*If you are concerned for yourself or an elderly family member, contact your health provider or Epilepsy Tasmania on **1300 852 853***

## A SNAPSHOT

**20,000** Tasmanians develop epilepsy during their their lifetime



**80,000**

family members, carers and friends are also affected



An increasing number of older people are being diagnosed with epilepsy



**Only one third** of Tasmanians with epilepsy drive their own car

**53%**

of Tasmanians living with epilepsy experience discrimination at some point in their life, and 51% of those within the last 12 months.

**55%** are on low incomes - half below the poverty line

*Epilepsy Tasmania is a not-for-profit organisation improving the quality of life and community participation of Tasmanians living with or affected by epilepsy.*

**1300 852 853**

[www.epilepsytasmania.org.au](http://www.epilepsytasmania.org.au)