

JIM C – HEALTH TERMS

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People with epilepsy not only struggle to overcome low self-esteem but also to overcome the stigma that is attached to having epilepsy.

HOW DID THE TERM “EPILEPSY” ORIGINATE?

***Definition:* A medical disorder involving episodes of irregular electrical discharge in the brain and characterized by the episodic loss of attention or sleepiness (petit mal) or by severe convulsions with loss of consciousness (grand mal).**

***Origin (Online Etymology):* 1578, from Middle French *epilepsie*, from Latin *epilepsia*, from Greek *epilepsia* "seizure," from *epi-* "upon" + *lepsis* "seizure," from *leps-*, future stem of *lambanein* "take hold of, grasp." Replaced the native name, falling sickness.**

Epilepsy was one of the first brain disorders to be described. It was mentioned in ancient Babylon more than 3,000 years ago.

- Epilepsy is a group of syndromes with vastly divergent symptoms but all involving episodic abnormal electrical activity in the brain**
- Causes include abnormality in brain wiring, an imbalance of nerve signaling chemicals, illness, and brain injury**
- It is not contagious and not caused by mental illness / retardation**
- It cannot be cured, but in some cases it does eventually go away**

Conventional Wisdom: Epilepsy = Electrical Disorder in the Brain

M of Z: Society's lack of understanding remains a big problem