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A Systematic Review of the Risks Factors Associated with the Onset and Natural Progression of Epilepsy

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Highlights

- Epilepsy is a neurological disease characterized by recurrent unprovoked seizures.
- Onset of epilepsy can begin at any age, but new cases are more likely to affect young children and the elderly. Approximately 0.6% of the Canadian population has epilepsy. There are numerous possible risk factors for epilepsy including brain injuries and tumors, central nervous system infections, neonatal events such as seizures, genetics, and stroke.
- Modifiable risk factors that could be targeted by prevention efforts include alcohol consumption, acquired brain injuries and CNS infections.

Abstract

Epilepsy is a neurological condition that affects more than 50 million individuals worldwide. It presents as unpredictable, temporary and recurrent seizures often having negative physical, psychological and social consequences. To inform disease prevention and management strategies, a comprehensive systematic review of the literature on risk factors for the onset and natural progression of epilepsy was conducted. Computerized bibliographic databases for systematic reviews, meta-analyses, observational studies and genetic association studies published between 1990 and 2013 describing etiological risk factors for epilepsy was searched.

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