

Global experts release new guidelines on prevention of progression of epileptic seizures, addressing critical treatment gaps

- New management concept - REST (Rapid and Early Seizure Termination) - launched to help prevent progression of seizures to more severe types which may result in brain damage, injuries or even death
- Published in *Epileptic Disorders*, this is the first international expert consensus to include standardized definitions for seizure emergencies plus guidance on optimal management to reduce the risk of seizure progression or of episodes becoming prolonged

Brussels, Belgium – 10 June 2024 – 07:00 AM CET– New recommendations released today in *Epileptic Disorders* by a global expert group comprising epileptologists, neurologists and pharmacologists from Europe and North America address the critical unmet needs associated with preventing progression of epileptic seizures to more severe and complex types that require urgent, emergency care.¹ The new recommendations include a robust and uniform definition framework for different types of seizures ranging from prolonged seizures to status epilepticus, as well as recommending treatment as early as possible to prevent progression to seizure emergencies.¹ Until now no international evidence-based clinical definitions existed to support decision-making.¹

Although there have been significant advancements in epilepsy treatment, including the availability of an increased number of chronic anti-seizure medications (ASMs), the reality remains that 30–40% of patients still do not achieve freedom from seizures.^{1,2,3} Uncontrolled seizures negatively impact patient and caregiver quality of life and increase the risk of injury, seizure recurrence and progression to more severe types associated with long-term serious consequences such as neuronal cell death, irreversible brain damage and death.^{1,2,3,4,5,6,7} These individuals face the constant threat that their seizures may progress to become a seizure emergency.⁴

To address the significant unmet need, the Seizure Termination Project* has announced a novel perspective on preventing seizure emergencies, advocating for the concept of ‘rapid and early seizure termination’ or REST, aiming for treatment administration as early as possible after seizure onset.¹ This approach not only seeks to prevent the escalation of seizures but also aims to alleviate the healthcare burden by reducing the need for hospitalization.¹ This marks a significant shift in the way epilepsy is managed today, emphasizing the importance of early intervention.

“It is essential that we prevent seizures from progressing to more severe and complex types which result in significant physical, psychological, cognitive and socioeconomic burden for patients, caregivers and healthcare systems alike,” said Dr Jesus Eric Pina-Garza, Co-chair of the Seizure Termination Project and Director of Pediatric Epilepsy at Centennial Children’s Hospital, Nashville, US. “Providing a clearer picture for clinicians, patients, and caregivers, on how and when to effectively treat prolonged seizures through the introduction of the concept of REST is an important step forward in disease management which will help to facilitate improved outcomes for patients and reduce healthcare resource utilization.”

“This initiative not only shines a light on the urgent need for innovations in seizure emergency management but also offers hope for patients and caregivers looking for more control over their condition. Our goal is to ensure



that every individual with epilepsy has the chance to live a life unburdened by the fear of seizure emergencies, and we are committed to advancing scientific and clinical research in this area,” said Dr Konrad Werhahn, Global Medical Affairs, UCB.

***About the Seizure Termination Project**

The Seizure Termination Project is a world-renowned expert working group comprising 12 epileptologists, neurologists and pharmacologists from Europe and North America who specialize in the care of both children and adults living with epilepsy. Founded in 2022 as an independent expert group, the Seizure Termination Project was supported by UCB with a goal to facilitate better management of prolonged seizures and seizure clusters and avoid progression to a seizure emergency.

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References:

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