

# Cognition in Epilepsy

## Information for participants of the Epilepsy Education Series

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### Why can epilepsy effect cognition (thinking skills)?

- It disrupts the electrical currents in our brain, affecting our cognition
- The medications to treat epilepsy can impact our cognition

Between 50-66% of people with epilepsy say they have experienced negative effects to their cognition.

### Memory consists of encoding, storage and retrieval

- We have many different types of memory, but episodic memory is most often compromised in epilepsy

### Why do we forget?

- Decay of “memory trace” – memory fades over time
- Interference: memory is disrupted by other memory traces
- Some forgetting is normal

### Memory Strategies

- Help us combat memory challenges by targeting encoding, storage, and retrieval
- Can be divided into internal and external strategies
  - Some of the most effective internal strategies include chunking, visualization, elaboration, and retrieval practice
  - Some of the most effective external strategies include lists, calendars, and reminders
- Lifestyle factors (such as exercise, nutrition, and managing stress) are very important for improving memory

### Additional resources

- [Cambridge Memory Manual: A Manual for Improving Everyday Memory Skills](#)
- [Retrieval Practice Guide: How to Use Retrieval Practice to Improve Learning](#)

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