



Jefferson Neurologist Shows Two-Thirds Reduction in Mortality Rate After Epilepsy Surgery

By Nikolaos Mouchtouris, BS

Sudden Unexpected Death by Epilepsy (SUDEP) is a rare occurrence among patients with well-controlled epilepsy. However, patients with drug-resistant epilepsy who continue to have seizures have a 1 in 150 risk of death by SUDEP.

Michael Sperling, MD, Baldwin Keys Professor of Neurology and the Director of the Jefferson Comprehensive Epilepsy Center, has been researching this complex disease for decades. His most recent publication in Neurology contains hope for patients with drug-resistant epilepsy.

Dr. Sperling and his colleagues Suzanne Barshow, Dr. Maromi Nei and Dr. Ali A. Asadi-Pooya reviewed 1,110 patients' records to find that the mortality risk in patients with drug-resistant epilepsy who underwent surgery is one-third of the mortality risk in the medication-only group of patients with drug-resistant epilepsy. They attribute this reduction to the higher rate of seizure-freedom as well as the lower proportion of tonic-clonic seizures in those who continued seizures after surgery.

"We hope this will serve as a wake-up call to neurologists that there is a risk to not referring patients for surgery," said Sperling. "The decision to persist in futile therapy is one with potentially fatal consequences."

Dr. Sperling and his colleagues are available for consultation in Center City Philadelphia. Jefferson epilepsy surgeons are available for consultation in Center City Philadelphia, Bryn Mawr and Voorhees. **Call 1-800-JEFF-NOW to make an appointment.**

Sperling MR, Barshow S, Nei M, Asadi-Pooya AA. A reappraisal of mortality after epilepsy surgery. Neurology. 2016 May 24;86(21):1938-44.

Monthly Epilepsy Support Groups

Allentown • Lancaster • Langhorne • Media • Philadelphia
Reading • Scranton • Wilkes-Barre
Parent Support Group at Grandview Hospital



**EPILEPSY
FOUNDATION**
Eastern Pennsylvania

WWW.EFEPA.ORG
(215) 629-5003

919 Walnut Street, Suite 700
Philadelphia, PA 19107