

## How to Qualify for Social Security Disability Benefits With Epilepsy

If you have epilepsy in which the seizures aren't controlled enough to allow you to work, you may be able to qualify for Social Security Disability benefits. The Social Security Administration ([SSA](#)) oversees two disability programs, Social Security Disability Insurance ([SSDI](#)) and Supplemental Security Income ([SSI](#)).

These programs have specific medical criteria that must be met, and you must be able to show that your medical condition will leave you unable to work for at least 12 months. A brain disorder that causes recurrent seizures, epilepsy could be caused by strokes or cerebral palsy, but most often the underlying cause is unknown.

The disorder has symptoms of varying levels ranging from simple staring without blinking to complete loss of consciousness. Medication often effectively reduces the severity and frequency of the seizures. Some seizures are challenging to control, and this makes the condition very dangerous when you are operating machinery or equipment, driving a vehicle, or near water.

### Meeting the Medical Criteria to Qualify

The SSA has a medical guide, which is called the [Blue Book](#). To qualify using the Blue Book, your medical condition must meet the specific criteria for the listing. Epilepsy is evaluated by Disability Determination Services (DDS) based on the type as well as the frequency and duration of the seizures. When epilepsy is properly controlled, it isn't considered disabling.

You need to provide documentation that supports your claim, indicating the severity of your condition and your seizure activity. [Listing 11.02](#) of the Blue Book is used to determine if a claimant qualifies with convulsive or non-convulsive epilepsy. The criteria that you must meet depend on the seizures you suffer and their severity. Here is a rundown of the requirements:

If your seizures are more frequent, you must show that grand mal seizures occur at least once each month for three consecutive months or that you have dyscognitive seizures at least once monthly for three consecutive months.

If your seizures have less frequency, you may qualify if you can show limitations in one of the following – concentrating, persisting or maintaining pace; remembering, understanding, or using information in your work activities; physical functioning, or interacting with others – and you will need to show that you suffer generalized grand mal seizures that occur at least once each month for four months or dyscognitive seizures that happen at least once every other week for four months.

### Meeting the Medical Vocational Allowance

If you are disabled but can't meet the criteria of a listing, you may qualify using a [medical vocational allowance](#). This approach takes your medical conditions, age, work history, educational background, treatment side effects and symptoms all into consideration. A residual functional capacity (RFC) form should be completed by [your physician](#), detailing all your restrictions and limitations. It will indicate that you are unable to drive or operate heavy machinery because of the seizure risks, that you cannot work dangerous equipment, and so forth.

### Applying for Disability Benefits with Epilepsy

To get your disability application underway, visit the [SSA's website](#) or call 1-800-772-1213 to schedule an appointment with your [local SSA office](#). You should make sure you have all of your [medical documents](#) in order before applying. After you send in your application, there is usually a 3 to 5 month waiting period to hear back from the SSA regarding your claim.

**Resources Sent Via:**

- <https://www.ssa.gov/>
- <https://www.ssa.gov/disability/>
- <https://www.ssa.gov/ssi/>
- <https://www.ssa.gov/disability/professionals/bluebook/AdultListings.htm>
- [https://www.ssa.gov/disability/professionals/bluebook/11.00-Neurological-Adult.htm#11\\_02](https://www.ssa.gov/disability/professionals/bluebook/11.00-Neurological-Adult.htm#11_02)
- <https://secure.ssa.gov/poms.nsf/lnx/0425025005>
- <https://www.disabilitybenefitscenter.org/how-to/get-physician-help-disability-claim>
- <https://www.ssa.gov/disability/disability.html>
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- <https://www.disabilitybenefitscenter.org/glossary/acceptable-medical-source>