



# UNDERSTANDING *Pseudo Seizures*



Pseudo seizures, also called Psychogenic Nonepileptic Seizures (PNES), are **real** and involuntary episodes that are **not** caused by abnormal electrical activity in the brain. They are the mind's response to emotional distress, trauma, or overwhelming stress.

## WHAT ARE PSEUDO SEIZURES (PNES)?

PNES look like epileptic seizures but are not caused by electrical misfires in the brain. They are believed to be a physical response to emotional or psychological pain.



Not caused by epilepsy or brain abnormalities



Often linked to trauma, stress, or emotional conflict



The body reacts to feelings the mind cannot safely express



Treatable with the right support and therapeutic approach

## WHAT PSEUDO SEIZURES MAY LOOK LIKE

- ♥ Shaking, jerking, or thrashing
- ♥ Eye closure (often tightly shut)
- ♥ Longer duration (often more than 2–3 minutes)
- ♥ Asynchronous movements (side-to-side)
- ♥ Fluctuating intensity
- ♥ Memory may be present during the episode
- ♥ May be triggered by stress or emotional situations

**Note:** Only a medical professional can diagnose PNES through a complete evaluation, including video EEG monitoring.



## POSSIBLE TRIGGERS & UNDERLYING FACTORS

- History of trauma or abuse
- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
- Anxiety, depression, or high stress
- Difficult life experiences
- Unresolved emotional pain
- Feeling overwhelmed or unsupported



## PNES vs. EPILEPTIC SEIZURES

|                       | PNES (Pseudo Seizures)                  | Epileptic Seizures                        |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| Cause                 | Psychological/emotional factors         | Abnormal electrical activity in the brain |
| Onset                 | Often triggered by stress or emotions   | Usually not triggered by emotions         |
| Duration              | Often longer and variable               | Usually shorter (1–2 minutes)             |
| Movements             | Side-to-side, asynchronous              | Usually rhythmic and consistent           |
| Awareness             | Some awareness may be present           | Typically unaware                         |
| Response to Treatment | Improves with therapy and coping skills | Treated with medication                   |



### ACCURATE DIAGNOSIS

Getting the right diagnosis is the first step toward healing and relief.



### THERAPY

Therapies like CBT, DBT, trauma-focused therapy, and EMDR can address the root causes.



### WHAT CAN HELP?

### STRESS MANAGEMENT

Learning coping skills, grounding techniques, and self-regulation can reduce episodes.



### SUPPORT SYSTEM

Having understanding, patient people in your life makes a big difference.



### SELF-COMPASSION

Be kind to yourself. Healing takes time, and progress is possible.

## IMPORTANT REMINDERS

- ♥ You are not faking or seeking attention.
- ♥ You are not to blame.
- ♥ Your symptoms are real and valid.
- ♥ Recovery is possible with the right support.
- ♥ You deserve to feel better and live a fulfilling life.



## A NOTE OF ENCOURAGEMENT

Living with pseudo seizures can be confusing and exhausting, but you don't have to face it alone. With compassion, the right treatment, and time, you can heal and regain control over your life.

*There is hope. There is help. You matter.*



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♥ You are stronger than you know. Your healing journey matters. ♥