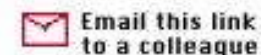


Medical Horizons



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■ Technology Provides Advance Warning for Epileptic Seizures

The development of a seizure warning system stands to improve future epilepsy management.

Armed with a five-year, \$4.4 million NIH grant, a multidisciplinary team is using real-time computerized analysis of electrical brain activity to recognize developing seizures minutes to hours before they occur.

Identification of this pre-seizure transition could be used to trigger the release of anticonvulsant drugs to reset the brain to a seizure-free state. Having patented the technique, University of Florida and the VA medical center here are seeking companies to develop monitoring systems or implantable devices for seizure prediction and medication delivery.

"Our goal is to develop safer, better tolerated, and more effective approaches to the treatment of epilepsy," said University of Florida neurologist J. Chris Sackellares, MD.

Dr. Sackellares and colleague Leonidas Iasemidis, PhD, hypothesized in 1988 that analytical techniques based on "chaos" theory may unlock the mysteries of seizure behavior.

The team also plans to explore novel methods for stopping seizures before they start with carefully timed pulses of electromagnetic stimulation to the brain.

-- Lisa Maxbauer

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