

# Epilepsy and Social Security Disability: The Top Things You Should Know

1. Epilepsy is addressed by the Social Security Administration (SSA) under Section 11.00 Neurological.
2. The SSA classifies epilepsy in two ways — **convulsive and nonconvulsive**. Section 11.02 lists the criteria for convulsive epilepsy, which is characterized by grand mal seizures. Section 11.03 lists the requirements for nonconvulsive epilepsy, which causes petit mal seizures.
3. Your epilepsy must be **severe enough to prevent you from performing any “substantial, gainful activity”** as defined by the SSA in order to gain benefits.
4. The requirements for **convulsive epilepsy** include:
  - seizures that occur more than once a month despite a course of prescribed medication for at least three months and,
  - either daytime episodes in which you lose consciousness **OR** nighttime episodes that cause disruption to your daily activities
5. The requirements for **nonconvulsive epilepsy** include:
  - seizures that occur more than once a week despite a course of prescribed medication for at least three months and,
  - your seizures cause disruption to your daily activities or you display abnormal behavior after your seizure
6. **Medical documentation is key to winning your case.** There must be a record of a medical diagnosis of your epilepsy and consistent treatment for your condition.
7. Types of medical documentation the SSA will look for include:
  - descriptions of your seizures along with any symptoms before and after the seizure, and how frequently they occur
  - your doctor’s notes and diagnosis of your epilepsy
  - a detailed history of your treatment including any EEGs, and medications you are taking with a description of any side effects

## Average Monthly Social Security Benefits for 2015

\$1165.18

*Disabled worker*

\$1831.77

*Disabled worker with a spouse and child*