

Living independently after epilepsy surgery

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Introduction: Epilepsy is a serious health problem that affects people of all ages, races and socioeconomical backgrounds. It can be treated with medication or surgery. Since 2002 Slovenia has an epilepsy surgery program for adult patients with medically intractable epilepsy.

Objectives: Aim of the study was to explore person's level of independency in daily occupations after epilepsy surgery.

Method: Fifty-three adult persons who underwent epilepsy surgery between 2002 and 2012 were invited to participate in a follow-up study. Forty-five persons responded (22 female, 23 male). To assess daily occupations a structured questionnaire was composed by authors. This questionnaire included topics of partnership, children, a job, driving licence, living independently etc. Patients were assessed to compare the living situation before and after the epilepsy surgery. Data were analysed with SPSS for Windows by using Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test.

Results: We have shown that 86,7% of the persons were seizure free after the surgery ($p=0,000$), 77,8% were independent in everyday life ($p=0,000$), 66,7% were allowed to drive ($p=0,001$), 84,4 % lived in a partnership, 15,5% were single or divorced, 57,8 % had children ($p=0,366$). Less persons (62,2%) were employed after the surgery than before. In general, 77,8 % were more satisfied with their life after the surgery.

Conclusion: Epilepsy surgery raises expectations in patients and their relatives. The study has shown that the persons with medically intractable epilepsy can benefit from epilepsy surgery. Everyday life has changed and satisfaction with it was higher.