

Vagal Nerve Stimulation for Epilepsy

Epilepsy is one of the most common chronic neurological conditions in paediatrics. More than 30% of epilepsy patients still have ongoing seizures despite medical treatment, i.e., refractory epilepsy. Among them, only a small proportion of them are suitable candidates for respective surgery. Vagal nerve stimulation (VNS) has been approved for palliative treatment in refractory epilepsy since 1997. More than 85,000 devices have been implanted worldwide and its short-term and long-term efficacy have been documented in many studies. There is also new generation VNS therapy with additional feature of seizure detection algorithm based on ictal tachycardia, followed by automatic stimulation. However, VNS is relatively under-utilized in the territory. We will discuss the local experience of VNS use. We will also review the indications, precautions and side effects of VNS for treatment of epilepsy.