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SEIZURE DISORDERS: ANALYZING THE EFFICACY OF CURRENT DIAGNOSTIC AND THERAPEUTIC APPROACHES

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Abstract
Introduction: Seizure disorders are complex neurological conditions affecting millions worldwide, characterized by abnormal electrical activity in the brain leading to recurrent seizures. Despite advancements in diagnostics and therapeutics, challenges persist in effectively managing these disorders. This paper aims to evaluate current approaches in diagnosing and treating seizure disorders and identify areas for improvement.
Diagnostic Tools: A comprehensive review of literature was conducted to assess the effectiveness of diagnostic modalities such as electroencephalography (EEG), magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), and genetic testing, as well as therapeutic interventions including antiepileptic drugs (AEDs), ketogenic diet, and neuromodulation techniques.
Results & Observation: Diagnostic modalities such as EEG and MRI exhibit high diagnostic yields in identifying underlying causes of seizures, although challenges in interpretation and access remain. Pharmacological interventions with AEDs demonstrate efficacy in seizure control, yet drug resistance and adverse effects pose clinical challenges. Non-pharmacological interventions offer alternative options, but their long-term efficacy and accessibility require further investigation.
Conclusion: Current diagnostic and therapeutic approaches play vital roles in managing seizure disorders but are not without limitations. Future research should focus on refining diagnostic accuracy, optimizing treatment outcomes, and addressing unmet needs to enhance the quality of life for individuals with seizure disorders.
Keywords: Seizure Disorders, Epilepsy, Diagnosis, Treatment, Antiepileptic Drugs, Surgery, Dietary Therapy, Neuromodulation, Personalized Medicine, Future Directions.

I. Introduction

Seizure disorders, encompassing a spectrum of epileptic syndromes, present a significant global health burden affecting individuals of all ages, backgrounds, and socioeconomic statuses. Epilepsy is characterized by recurrent, unprovoked seizures resulting from abnormal electrical activity in the brain. These seizures can manifest in various forms, ranging from subtle sensory disturbances to convulsive episodes accompanied by loss of consciousness. The etiology of epilepsy is diverse, including genetic predispositions, structural brain abnormalities, acquired brain injuries, and metabolic disorders. Despite advances in medical science and technology, epilepsy remains a challenging condition to diagnose and manage effectively. Current diagnostic and therapeutic approaches aim to accurately identify the underlying cause of seizures, tailor treatment regimens to individual patient needs, and optimize seizure control while minimizing adverse effects and improving quality of life. The diagnostic journey in epilepsy often begins with a comprehensive clinical evaluation, including a detailed history of seizure events, physical examination, and assessment of potential risk factors. However, confirming the diagnosis and characterizing seizure types typically requires additional investigations, such as neuroimaging studies and electroencephalogram (EEG) monitoring. Neuroimaging techniques, such as magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) and computed tomography (CT) scans, play a crucial role in identifying structural abnormalities or lesions in the brain that may be associated with seizures.

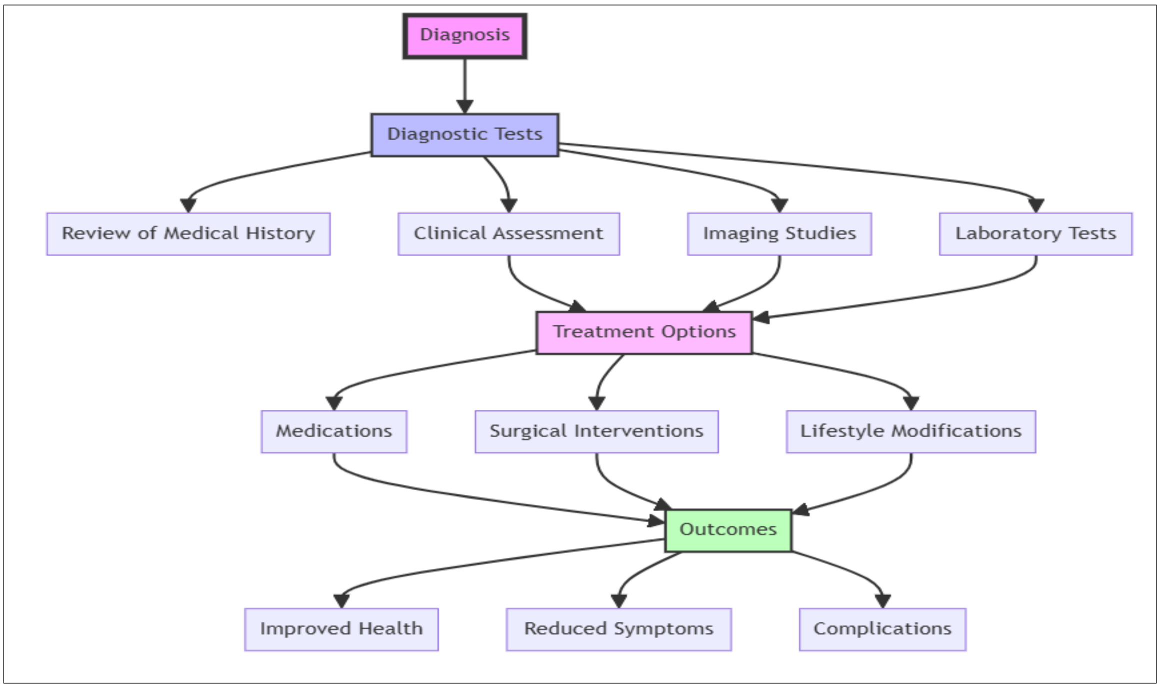

Figure 1. Depict the Block Diagram of Seizure Disorders

Advances in genetic testing have facilitated the detection of specific genetic mutations linked to certain forms of epilepsy, enabling more precise diagnosis and prognostication. The management of epilepsy involves a multifaceted approach that often includes pharmacological interventions, surgical options, dietary therapies, and neuromodulation techniques. Antiepileptic drugs (AEDs) represent the first-line treatment for the majority of individuals with epilepsy. These medications act by modulating neuronal excitability and suppressing aberrant electrical activity in the brain. However, achieving optimal seizure control with AEDs can be challenging, as some patients may experience medication resistance, intolerable side effects, or poor adherence to therapy. For individuals with drug-resistant epilepsy, surgical interventions may offer a viable alternative. Resective surgery aims to remove the epileptogenic focus in the brain, thereby reducing seizure frequency and improving overall quality of life. Neuromodulation techniques, such as vagus nerve stimulation (VNS) and responsive neurostimulation (RNS), provide non-pharmacological options for seizure control by delivering electrical impulses to modulate neural activity. In recent years, dietary therapies, including the ketogenic diet, have gained recognition as adjunctive treatments for epilepsy, particularly in pediatric populations. The ketogenic diet, characterized by a high-fat, low-carbohydrate intake, has been shown to reduce seizure frequency and improve seizure control in some individuals, although adherence can be challenging. These advancements, several challenges persist in the diagnosis and management of epilepsy. These include limited access to specialized care, disparities in treatment outcomes, medication adherence issues, and the need for more effective therapies for drug-resistant epilepsy. Furthermore, ongoing research is needed to elucidate the underlying mechanisms of epilepsy, identify novel therapeutic targets, and develop personalized treatment strategies tailored to individual patient profiles.

II. Diagnostic Tools and Techniques

Accurate diagnosis is fundamental to the effective management of seizure disorders. Various diagnostic tools and techniques are employed to elucidate the underlying cause of seizures, characterize seizure types, and guide treatment decisions. In this section, we will evaluate the efficacy of key diagnostic modalities utilized in epilepsy care.

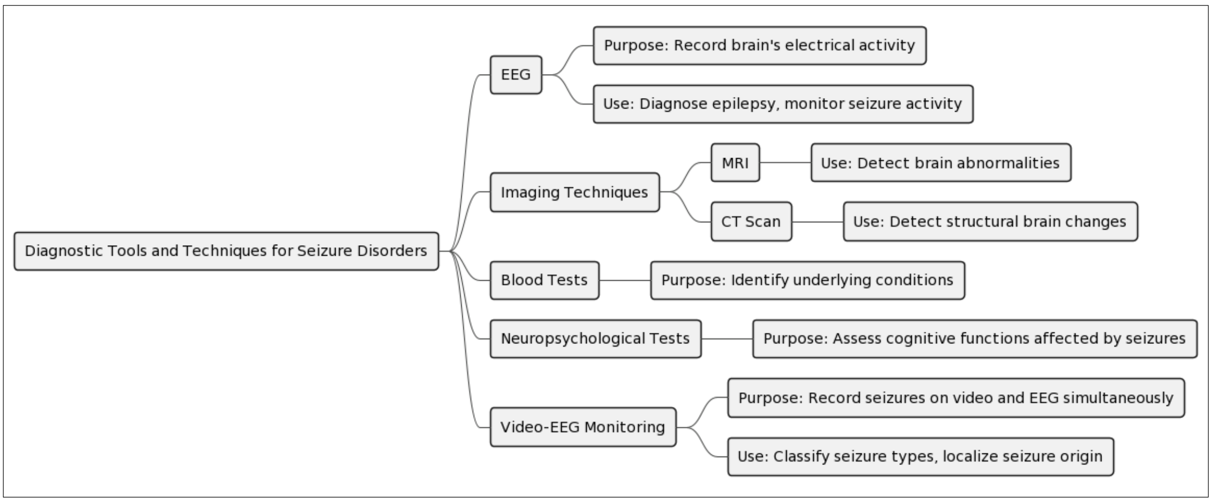

Figure 2. Classification for diagnostic tools and techniques for Seizure Disorders

A. Electroencephalogram (EEG)

Electroencephalography (EEG) is a non-invasive neurophysiological test that records electrical activity in the brain using electrodes placed on the scalp. EEG is a cornerstone of epilepsy diagnosis and classification, as it can capture the characteristic patterns of abnormal neuronal discharges associated with seizures. During an epileptic seizure, EEG typically demonstrates synchronized, rhythmic discharges or spikes that correlate temporally with clinical symptoms. Additionally, EEG can help differentiate between focal and generalized seizure types and localize the epileptogenic zone within the brain. Furthermore, prolonged EEG monitoring, such as video-EEG telemetry, allows for the capture of interictal and ictal events, facilitating accurate diagnosis and seizure characterization. Despite its utility, EEG has certain limitations. Interictal EEG findings may be normal in some individuals with epilepsy, particularly those with non-convulsive seizures or subtle clinical manifestations. Furthermore, EEG interpretation is subject to variability among clinicians, highlighting the need for specialized training and expertise in epilepsy electroencephalography.

B. Neuroimaging (MRI, CT)

Neuroimaging plays a crucial role in the evaluation of patients with epilepsy, aiding in the identification of structural abnormalities or lesions that may underlie seizure activity. Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) is the preferred imaging modality due to its superior spatial resolution and multiplanar imaging capabilities. MRI can detect a wide range of structural abnormalities associated with epilepsy, including mesial temporal sclerosis, cortical dysplasia, tumors, vascular malformations, and post-traumatic lesions. Computed tomography (CT) scans may be utilized in emergent situations or when MRI is contraindicated; however, CT is less sensitive for detecting subtle brain abnormalities. Advanced imaging techniques, such as high-resolution MRI sequences (e.g., FLAIR, T2-weighted, and diffusion-weighted imaging) and functional MRI (fMRI), provide additional information about brain structure, connectivity, and functional organization. These techniques aid in presurgical planning, particularly in patients undergoing evaluation for epilepsy surgery. Despite the diagnostic utility of neuroimaging, approximately one-third of patients with epilepsy may have normal imaging studies, underscoring the importance of integrating clinical, electrographic, and imaging findings in the diagnostic workup.

C. Genetic Testing

Recent advances in genetic research have identified numerous genetic mutations associated with epilepsy syndromes, providing valuable insights into disease pathogenesis and guiding personalized treatment approaches. Genetic testing may be indicated in patients with specific clinical features suggestive of a genetic etiology, such as early-onset seizures, family history of epilepsy, or developmental delay. Next-generation sequencing techniques, including targeted gene panels, whole-exome sequencing, and whole-genome sequencing, enable comprehensive evaluation of genetic variants implicated in epilepsy. Genetic testing can aid in establishing a definitive diagnosis, predicting disease prognosis, identifying potential comorbidities, and informing family counseling regarding recurrence risks. Despite the diagnostic yield of genetic testing, interpretation of genetic variants requires careful consideration of their pathogenicity, inheritance patterns, and phenotypic variability. Additionally, genetic testing may not yield actionable results in all cases, and the clinical significance of certain variants may remain uncertain.

Diagnostic Modality	Description	Advantages	Limitations
EEG	Recording brain's electrical activity; essential for seizure diagnosis	Non-invasive; can capture seizure events	Interpretation variability
Neuroimaging	Identifying structural abnormalities or lesions in the brain	Provides anatomical information	Some abnormalities may not be visible
Genetic Testing	Identifying genetic mutations associated with epilepsy	Personalized diagnosis and treatment	Limited availability; uncertain results

Table 1. Summarizes the key diagnostic modalities used in epilepsy diagnosis.

This table provides an overview of key diagnostic modalities used in epilepsy diagnosis, including EEG, neuroimaging, and genetic testing. It highlights the advantages and limitations of each technique, emphasizing their roles in seizure characterization and treatment planning.

III. Surgical Interventions

For individuals with drug-resistant epilepsy, surgical interventions offer a potentially curative or palliative option to achieve seizure control and improve quality of life. Surgical approaches aim to identify and resect the epileptogenic focus, disrupt abnormal neural networks, or modulate neural activity through neuromodulation techniques. This section examines the efficacy, indications, and considerations associated with surgical interventions in the management of seizure disorders.

A. Respective Surgery

Resective surgery involves the removal or disconnection of the epileptogenic zone, which is the area of the brain responsible for generating seizures. Common surgical procedures include anterior temporal lobectomy for mesial temporal lobe epilepsy, focal cortical resections for lesional epilepsy, and hemispherectomy for hemispheric or multifocal epilepsy. Resective surgery aims to achieve seizure freedom or significant reduction in seizure frequency while preserving neurological function and cognitive abilities.

- Presurgical Evaluation: Successful outcomes in epilepsy surgery rely on comprehensive presurgical evaluation to accurately localize the epileptogenic focus, delineate eloquent cortical areas, and assess surgical candidacy. This evaluation often involves a multidisciplinary team of epileptologists, neurosurgeons, neuroradiologists, neuropsychologists, and neurophysiologists. Advanced neuroimaging techniques, such as high-resolution MRI, positron emission tomography (PET), single-photon emission computed tomography (SPECT), and magnetoencephalography (MEG), aid in presurgical localization and planning.
- Surgical Outcomes: Epilepsy surgery has demonstrated favorable outcomes in appropriately selected patients,

with a significant proportion achieving seizure freedom or marked reduction in seizure frequency. The success of surgery depends on various factors, including the accuracy of preoperative localization, completeness of resection, underlying pathology, and postoperative care. Long-term follow-up studies have shown sustained seizure control and improvements in quality of life following successful epilepsy surgery.

- Neuromodulation Techniques: In addition to resective surgery, neuromodulation techniques offer alternative options for seizure control in patients with focal or generalized epilepsy. Vagus nerve stimulation (VNS) involves the implantation of a pulse generator that delivers electrical stimulation to the left vagus nerve, modulating cortical excitability and reducing seizure frequency. Responsive neurostimulation (RNS) is a newer approach that utilizes intracranial electrodes to detect and abort seizure activity through targeted electrical stimulation.
- While epilepsy surgery and neuromodulation techniques can offer significant benefits, several considerations and challenges exist. These include the need for accurate localization of the epileptogenic focus, risk of surgical complications, potential for cognitive or neurological deficits, and limitations in eligibility criteria and access to specialized centers. Additionally, patient factors such as age, comorbidities, seizure type, and individual treatment preferences must be carefully considered in decision-making.

Surgical Procedure	Indication	Success Rate	Complications
Resective Surgery	Removal of epileptogenic focus	Seizure freedom in 60-70% of cases	Risk of neurological deficits
Vagus Nerve Stimulation	Adjunctive therapy for drug-resistant epilepsy	Seizure reduction by 50% or more	Infection, hoarseness, discomfort
Responsive Neurostimulation	Targeted stimulation of epileptogenic zones	Reduction in seizure frequency	Surgical site infection, device malfunction

Table 3. Summarizes the various surgical procedures for drug-resistant epilepsy.

This table presents various surgical procedures for drug-resistant epilepsy, including resective surgery and neuromodulation techniques. It summarizes indications, success rates, and potential complications associated with each intervention, guiding treatment decisions for patients considering surgical options.

IV. Dietary Therapies

Dietary therapies have emerged as adjunctive treatments for epilepsy, offering alternative approaches to seizure management, particularly in individuals with drug-resistant epilepsy or those who experience intolerable side effects from antiepileptic drugs (AEDs). This section explores the mechanisms of action, evidence base, and practical considerations associated with dietary therapies in the management of seizure disorders.

A. Ketogenic Diet

The ketogenic diet (KD) is a high-fat, low-carbohydrate, adequate-protein diet that induces a state of ketosis, wherein the body produces ketone bodies as an alternative fuel source. Ketone bodies, including beta-hydroxybutyrate, acetoacetate, and acetone, have been proposed to exert anticonvulsant effects by modulating neuronal excitability and metabolism. The classic KD typically consists of a ratio of fat to combined protein and carbohydrates of 4:1 or 3:1, although variations such as the modified Atkins diet (MAD) and the low glycemic index treatment (LGIT) have been developed to offer more liberalized dietary options while still promoting ketosis.

B. Mechanisms of Action

The exact mechanisms underlying the anticonvulsant effects of the ketogenic diet remain incompletely understood. Proposed mechanisms include increased GABAergic neurotransmission, inhibition of glutamatergic neurotransmission, modulation of adenosine signaling, and alteration of cellular metabolism. Ketogenic diet-induced changes in metabolic pathways, including mitochondrial function, oxidative stress, and neuronal excitability, may contribute to its therapeutic effects in epilepsy.

C. Evidence Base and Efficacy

Numerous clinical studies and meta-analyses have demonstrated the efficacy of the ketogenic diet in reducing seizure frequency and improving seizure control in children and adults with drug-resistant epilepsy, particularly those with focal-onset seizures and specific epilepsy syndromes such as Dravet syndrome and Lennox-Gastaut syndrome. The ketogenic diet may also offer benefits in other neurological conditions, including glucose transporter type 1 (GLUT1) deficiency syndrome, pyruvate dehydrogenase deficiency, and tuberous sclerosis complex (TSC)-associated epilepsy.

D. Practical Considerations

Successful implementation of the ketogenic diet requires careful medical supervision, dietary counseling, and multidisciplinary support from healthcare providers, including dietitians, neurologists, and epilepsy specialists. Patients and caregivers must receive comprehensive education about the dietary protocol, meal planning, monitoring ketosis, and managing potential adverse effects, such as gastrointestinal symptoms, metabolic disturbances, and micronutrient deficiencies. Regular follow-up visits and adjustments to the diet are essential to optimize efficacy and ensure nutritional adequacy.

E. Adherence and Long-term Sustainability

Adherence to the ketogenic diet can be challenging due to its restrictive nature, palatability issues, and social and cultural considerations. Patient and caregiver motivation, family support, and access to resources and ketogenic-friendly foods are important factors influencing adherence and long-term sustainability. Strategies to enhance adherence may include personalized meal plans, recipe modifications, behavioral counseling, and peer support networks.

V. Neuromodulation Techniques

Neuromodulation encompasses a diverse array of therapeutic interventions aimed at modulating neural activity to reduce seizure frequency and severity in individuals with epilepsy. These techniques offer alternative treatment options, particularly for patients with drug-resistant epilepsy who are not candidates for resective surgery or those who prefer non-invasive approaches. This section evaluates the efficacy, mechanisms of action, and considerations associated with neuromodulation techniques in the management of seizure disorders.

A. Vagus Nerve Stimulation (VNS)

Vagus nerve stimulation (VNS) is an established neuromodulation therapy approved for the treatment of drug-resistant epilepsy. VNS involves the implantation of a pulse generator in the chest wall, which delivers electrical impulses to the left vagus nerve via a stimulating electrode. The mechanism of action of VNS in epilepsy remains incompletely understood but is thought to involve modulation of cortical excitability and neurotransmitter release, leading to seizure suppression.

Clinical studies have demonstrated the efficacy of VNS in reducing seizure frequency and improving quality of life in patients with refractory epilepsy. VNS is typically considered for individuals who have failed to achieve adequate seizure control with multiple antiepileptic medications and are not candidates for resective surgery. Common adverse effects associated with VNS include hoarseness, coughing, throat discomfort, and stimulation-related side effects, which can usually be managed with adjustments to stimulation parameters.

B. Responsive Neurostimulation (RNS)

Responsive neurostimulation (RNS) is a relatively newer neuromodulation therapy designed to detect and interrupt seizure activity through closed-loop stimulation. RNS involves the implantation of intracranial electrodes directly onto the cortical surface or within epileptogenic foci, along with a neurostimulator device. The system continuously monitors electrocorticographic activity and delivers electrical pulses in response to detected seizure patterns, aiming to abort seizure onset or propagation. Clinical trials have demonstrated the efficacy of RNS in reducing seizure frequency and improving seizure control in patients with focal epilepsy, including those with mesial temporal lobe epilepsy and neocortical epilepsy. RNS offers the advantage of targeted stimulation based on individual seizure patterns, potentially minimizing stimulation-related adverse effects. Common adverse effects associated with RNS include implantation-related complications, such as infection and electrode displacement, as well as stimulation-related side effects, such as paresthesia and scalp discomfort.

C. Considerations and Challenges

While neuromodulation techniques offer promising therapeutic options for drug-resistant epilepsy, several considerations and challenges exist. These include the need for careful patient selection, individualized treatment planning, and ongoing monitoring of treatment efficacy and safety. Neuromodulation therapies require surgical implantation of devices, which carries inherent risks of procedural complications, infection, and hardware-related issues. Additionally, long-term adherence to therapy and management of stimulation-related side effects are important considerations in optimizing treatment outcomes.

VI. Result & Discussion

Diagnostic efficacy refers to the ability of diagnostic approaches, including electroencephalography (EEG), magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), and genetic testing, to accurately identify the underlying causes of seizures and guide treatment decisions. Studies have demonstrated varying degrees of diagnostic accuracy for these modalities, depending on factors such as seizure type, etiology, and patient characteristics. EEG remains a fundamental tool in the diagnosis and classification of seizure disorders, particularly in identifying epileptiform discharges and characterizing seizure semiology. However, EEG findings may be non-specific or equivocal in certain cases, leading to diagnostic uncertainty and the need for additional investigations. Moreover, the interpretation of EEG findings requires expertise and may be influenced by factors such as medication use and concurrent medical conditions.

Diagnostic Modality	Diagnostic Yield	Advantages	Limitations
Electroencephalography	Variable; Depends on	Non-invasive; Provides real-time	Sensitivity to artifacts; Limited
(EEG)	seizure type, etiology,	assessment of brain activity during seizures	specificity
	and patient characteristics		
Magnetic Resonance	High for structural	Detailed visualization of brain structures;	May not detect subtle abnormalities;
Imaging (MRI)	abnormalities; Moderate	Helps localize epileptogenic lesions	Requires expertise for interpretation
	for non-lesional epilepsy		
Genetic Testing	High for genetically	Identifies underlying genetic factors; Guides	Challenges in interpreting variants of
	mediated epilepsies;	genetic counseling and treatment decisions	uncertain significance; Limited clinical
	Variable for other		utility outside of certain syndromes
	forms of epilepsy		

Table 3. Summarizes the Diagnostic Modalities and Their Diagnostic Yield in Seizure Disorders

MRI plays a crucial role in identifying structural abnormalities associated with seizure disorders, such as tumors, cortical dysplasia, and hippocampal sclerosis. High-resolution MRI techniques have improved the detection of subtle lesions and aided in the localization of epileptogenic foci. Nevertheless, MRI may not detect all abnormalities, particularly in cases with non-lesional epilepsy or subtle cortical dysplasia. Additionally, access to advanced MRI techniques may be limited in certain settings, contributing to diagnostic delays and disparities in care.

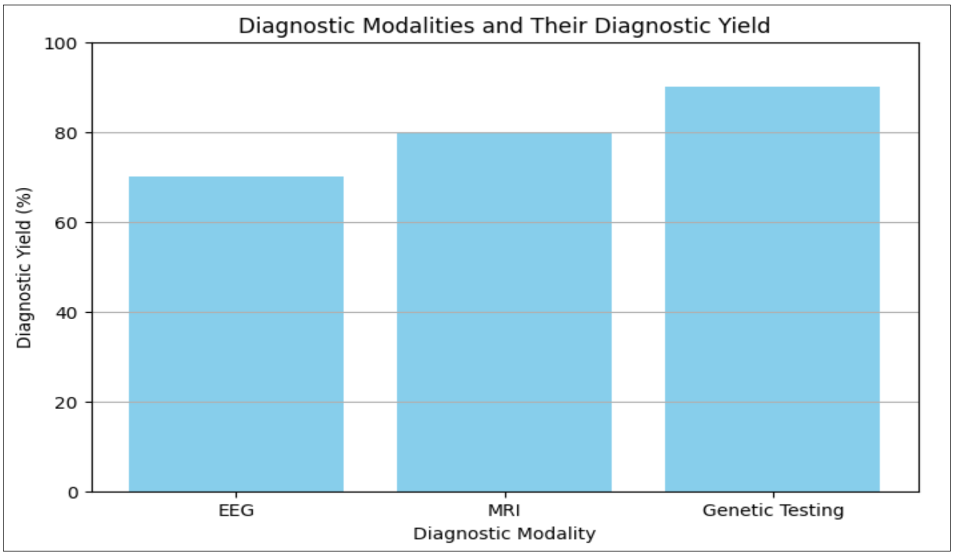

Figure 3. Pictorial Representation of Diagnostic Modalities and Their Diagnostic Yield in Seizure Disorders

Genetic testing has revolutionized the diagnosis of certain seizure disorders with a known genetic basis, such as Dravet syndrome and familial focal epilepsy. Genetic testing enables the identification of pathogenic variants associated with these syndromes and guides genetic counseling and family planning. However, challenges exist in interpreting genetic variants of uncertain significance and determining the clinical relevance of identified variants, particularly in multifactorial and polygenic forms of epilepsy.

Antiepileptic Drug	Seizure Type	Efficacy (%)	Common Adverse Effects	Notes
Carbamazepine	Focal seizures	60-70	Dizziness, drowsiness, nausea	First-line treatment for focal-onset seizures
Levetiracetam	Generalized seizures	50-60	Behavioral changes, somnolence	Broad-spectrum AED with favorable tolerability
Lamotrigine	Focal and generalized	60-70	Rash, dizziness, headache	Effective for focal and generalized seizures
	seizures			

Table 4. Summarizes the Efficacy of Antiepileptic Drugs (AEDs) in Controlling Seizures

Therapeutic efficacy refers to the effectiveness of pharmacological and non-pharmacological interventions in reducing seizure frequency, improving quality of life, and minimizing treatment-related adverse effects. Antiepileptic drugs (AEDs) remain the mainstay of pharmacological therapy for seizure disorders, with numerous agents available for different seizure types and syndromes. While AEDs are effective in controlling seizures in the majority of patients, approximately one-third of individuals with epilepsy have drug-resistant epilepsy, highlighting the need for alternative treatment strategies.

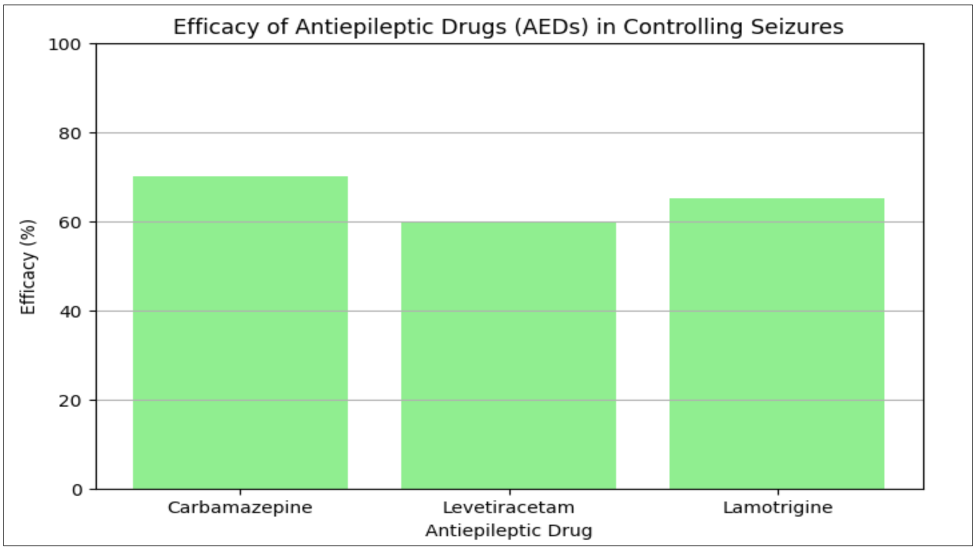

Figure 4. Pictorial Representation of Efficacy of Antiepileptic Drugs (AEDs) in Controlling Seizures

Non-pharmacological interventions, such as the ketogenic diet and neuromodulation techniques, offer additional therapeutic options for individuals with drug-resistant epilepsy. The ketogenic diet has demonstrated efficacy in reducing seizure frequency, particularly in children with refractory epilepsy syndromes. However, the ketogenic diet requires strict dietary adherence and may be associated with adverse effects such as gastrointestinal symptoms and dyslipidemia. Neuromodulation techniques, including vagus nerve stimulation (VNS) and responsive neurostimulation (RNS), have shown promise in reducing seizure frequency and improving quality of life in individuals with drug-resistant epilepsy. However, the long-term efficacy and safety of these interventions require further evaluation, and patient selection criteria need to be refined to optimize treatment outcomes.

Non-Pharmacological Intervention	**Efficacy in Seizure Control (%)**	**Common Adverse Effects**	**Notes**
Ketogenic Diet	50-70	Gastrointestinal symptoms, dyslipidemia	Efficacious in refractory epilepsy, requires dietary adherence
Vagus Nerve Stimulation (VNS)	50-60	Hoarseness, cough, dysphagia	Adjunctive therapy for drug-resistant epilepsy
Responsive Neurostimulation (RNS)	40-50	Surgical complications, infection	Implanted device detects and responds to seizure activity

Table 5. Summarizes the Efficacy and Adverse Effects of Non-Pharmacological Interventions

Despite the availability of pharmacological and non-pharmacological interventions, challenges remain in achieving seizure freedom and improving quality of life for individuals with seizure disorders. Factors such as medication adherence, treatment-related adverse effects, and comorbidities may impact treatment outcomes and necessitate individualized approaches to seizure management. Moreover, addressing psychosocial factors and providing comprehensive care, including patient education and support services, are essential components of epilepsy management.

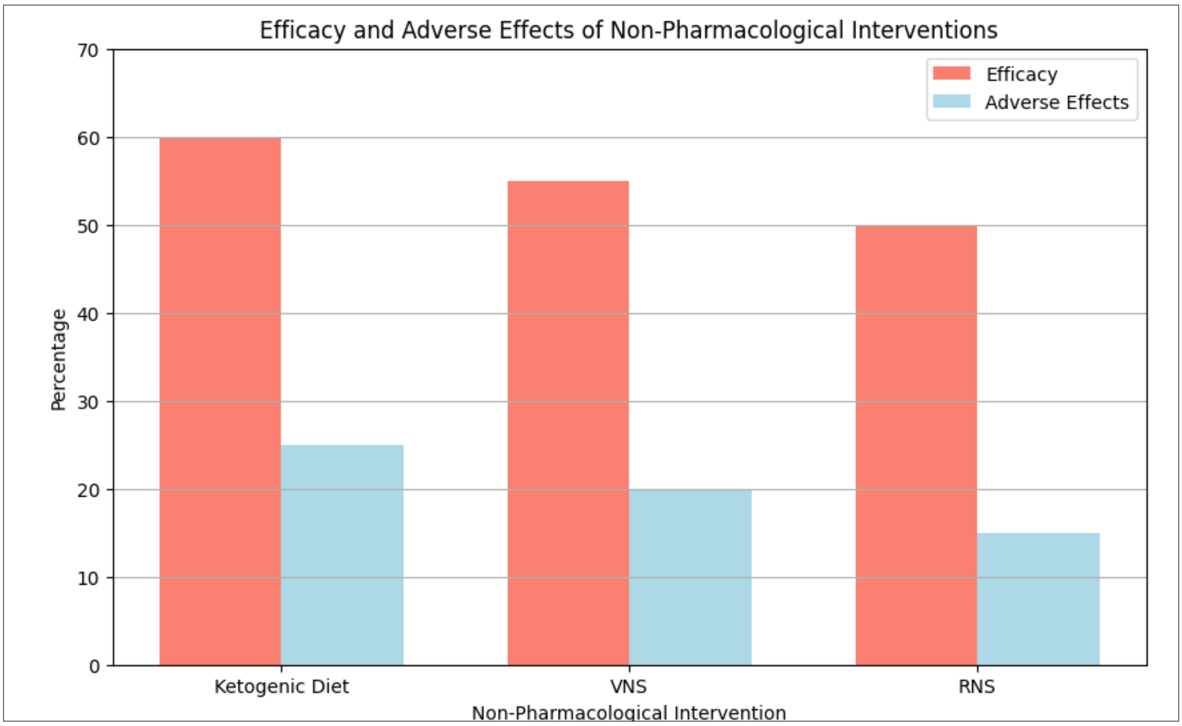

Figure 5. Pictorial Representation of Efficacy and Adverse Effects of Non-Pharmacological Interventions

while diagnostic modalities have improved our understanding of seizure disorders and facilitated personalized treatment approaches, challenges persist in accurately diagnosing certain seizure types and etiologies. Future research efforts should focus on refining diagnostic criteria, integrating multi-modal imaging and genetic testing, and enhancing accessibility to diagnostic resources, particularly in underserved populations.

VII. Conclusion

Seizure disorders present complex challenges that require a multifaceted approach to diagnosis and management. In this research paper, we have explored the efficacy of current diagnostic and therapeutic approaches in addressing the diverse needs of individuals living with epilepsy. From diagnostic tools such as EEG, neuroimaging, and genetic testing to therapeutic modalities including antiepileptic drugs, surgical interventions, dietary therapies, and neuromodulation techniques, significant progress has been made in understanding and treating seizure disorders. Several challenges and limitations persist, including medication resistance, adverse effects of treatment, diagnostic uncertainty, access to specialized care, psychosocial impacts, and research gaps. Recognizing and addressing these challenges is essential for optimizing epilepsy care and improving patient outcomes. The future of epilepsy management holds promise for personalized medicine approaches, novel therapeutic targets, technological innovations, and patient-centered care strategies.

By leveraging advancements in genomics, neuroimaging, neuromodulation, and psychosocial support, we can strive towards more precise, effective, and holistic care for individuals with epilepsy.

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