



Introduction to Disability Living Allowance (for people with epilepsy)

Disability Living Allowance (DLA) is a tax-free social security benefit for people with an illness or disability who need help with:

- getting around
- personal care, or
- both of these.

You can claim DLA even if you:

- do not actually get the help you need
- live alone, or
- are working.

DLA is made up of two components (parts). You may qualify for just one component or both components.

- The care component – if you need help with your personal care because of your disability.
- The mobility component – if you need help to get around because of your disability.

Assess yourself for Disability Living Allowance (related to your epilepsy)

Children with epilepsy

If you would like to find out if a child with epilepsy may be eligible for DLA, you may find it helpful to contact Cerebra, www.cerebra.org.uk, Tel. 01267 244200 . They have produced a step-by-step guide to claiming DLA for children under 16 with brain related conditions.

Adults with epilepsy

The questionnaire at the end of this factsheet will help you find out if you may be eligible for one or both components of DLA.

How to apply for Disability Living Allowance

To apply for DLA, you need to complete an application form. There are two forms – one for people under the age of 16 and one for people over 16. You can order a claim pack and form by:

- phoning the Benefit Enquiry Line for People with Disabilities, Tel. 0800 88 22 00 (England, Scotland and Wales) or Tel. 0800 220 674 (Northern Ireland)
- contacting Jobcentre Plus, Tel. 0800 055 6688 or your local social security office
- downloading an application form from the Direct Gov website, www.direct.gov.uk.

Help with completing the Disability Living Allowance form

Many people find that their claims are more likely to be successful if they have help with completing the claim forms. You can get help from the following sources:

Benefits Agency:

Tel. 0800 44 11 44

Disability Alliance Rights Advice Line:

Tel. 020 7247 8763 (Mondays and Wednesdays, 2pm - 4pm)

Website: www.disabilityalliance.org

Citizens Advice Bureau:

For details of your local branch, Tel. 020 7833 2181

Website: www.adviceguide.org.uk

Tips for completing the Disability Living Allowance form

- You do not need to answer questions that do not apply to you.
- Don't assume that the person who deals with your claim knows about epilepsy or its symptoms and effects. Give lots of description and detail about your seizures and recovery time, even things that you find embarrassing.
- Include information about any side-effects you experience from anti-epileptic drugs.
- Don't worry if you repeat information – it is better to give too much information than not enough.
- Try to explain clearly the type of help you need and when you need it.
- Make it clear what you think might happen if you didn't have supervision or someone keeping an eye on you.
- Describe any events that have happened in the past due to your seizures, which could have put you in danger of injury if you hadn't had help.
- Explain why you need help from somebody else for your care and mobility needs, even if nobody helps you at the moment.
- Put what you can't do, not what you can do.
- Try to give an average of the number of bad days over a given period of time (for example eight days out of 14). You stand more chance of qualifying for DLA if you can show that you need help on most, or all, days of the week.
- It is a good idea to use the terms 'bad days' and 'better days'.
- If you have other illnesses or disabilities as well as epilepsy, ask for help in answering questions about them from your doctor or another organisation who knows about that

condition. If you would like help to find details of a particular health organisation, phone the Epilepsy Helpline, freephone 0808 800 5050 or send an email to helpline@epilepsy.org.uk

Different levels of Disability Living Allowance

Disability Living Allowance is paid at different amounts, depending on the amount of care or help with mobility you need. This table shows the different levels of DLA.

Care allowance			
Level	Qualifying age	Qualifying needs	Amount
High	3 months - 64 years	Care needs throughout the day and night	£64.50 per week*
Middle	3 months - 64 years	Care needs throughout the day or night	£43.15 per week*
Low	3 months - 64 years	Care needs at certain times or when cooking	£17.10 per week*
Mobility allowance			
Level	Qualifying age	Qualifying criteria	Amount
High	3 years - 64 years	Unable/virtually unable to walk	£45.00 per week*
Low	5 years - 64 years	Needs guidance and supervision when moving around	£17.10 per week*

* This information is correct 7 November 2007

Epilepsy Action makes every effort to ensure the accuracy of information in its publications but cannot be held liable for any actions taken based on this information.

If you are reading this publication more than 12 months after the date shown below, please contact Epilepsy Action to check whether it is still current.

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Assess yourself for Disability Living Allowance (related to your epilepsy) - Adults

Please note that the following information is provided as a guide only. Epilepsy Action cannot be held responsible if your claim for DLA is not successful.

Please answer the following questions.

Eligibility	Yes	No
1. Are you aged between 16 and 65?		
2. Have you had care or mobility needs for the last three months?		
3. Are you likely to have those needs for the next six months?		
4. Have you lived in Great Britain for at least 26 weeks in the past year?		
5. Do you have the right to live in Great Britain, without any restrictions?		

If the answer to any of the eligibility questions is NO:

Sorry, you are not eligible to claim DLA at the moment. If your circumstances change, you may wish to try again.

If the answer to all of the eligibility questions is YES:

Your answers indicate that you can go on to find out whether you may qualify for DLA.
Please answer the following questions.

Care component – epilepsy related

Please tick

	Yes	No
1. Does your epilepsy mean that you need help from someone else throughout the day?		
For example: <i>Do you lose control of your bladder and/or bowels during a seizure and need help changing clothes?</i> <i>Do you need first aid after a seizure?</i>		
2. Does your epilepsy mean that you need someone else to keep an eye on you during the day in order to prevent danger to yourself or others?		
For example: <i>Do you need help during a complex partial seizure, to guide you away from danger?</i> <i>Have you had any episodes of status epilepticus?</i>		
3. Does your epilepsy mean that you need help from someone else during the night?		
For example: <i>Do you lose control of your bladder/ bowels during a seizure and need help changing clothing and bedding?</i> <i>Do you need first aid after a seizure?</i>		

4. Does your epilepsy mean that you need someone around at night in order to prevent danger to yourself or others?	Yes	No
For example: Do you need help during a complex partial seizure, to guide you away from danger? Have you had any episodes of status epilepticus?		
5. Does your epilepsy mean that you need help from someone else at certain parts of the day?	Yes	No
For example: Do you need someone to be there while you have a bath or shower? Do you need someone to remind you to take your medication?		
6. Are you able to cook a meal for yourself if you have all the ingredients?	Yes	No
For example: Would you be in danger if you had a seizure while preparing a meal? (this may be due to using sharp knives, boiling water and gas rings.)		

Mobility component – epilepsy related

Please tick

7. Does your epilepsy mean that you need help, guidance or supervision from someone else when you are in unfamiliar places?	Yes	No
For example: Do you fall to the ground and need help when you have a seizure? Do you have complex partial seizures which cause you to wander off and put you in danger? (this may be due to traffic, stairs, water etc.)		

Results

If you answered YES to any of the questions 1,2,3,4 & 5	You may be eligible for care component. Please see <i>How to apply for Disability Living Allowance (Adults)</i> on page 1 of this factsheet.
If you answered NO to question 6	You may be eligible for care component. Please see <i>How to apply for Disability Living Allowance (Adults)</i> on page 1 of this factsheet.
If you answered YES to question 7	You may be eligible for mobility component. Please see <i>How to apply for Disability Living Allowance (Adults)</i> on page 1 of this factsheet.

If all your answers are different to the above results, you would not be eligible to receive DLA.