

Could You Have Pseudobulbar Affect?



Some neurologic conditions and brain injuries cause a disruption in brain signals that control emotion, resulting in pseudobulbar affect (PBA). Patients who suffer from PBA are prone to frequent and exaggerated outbursts of crying or laughing, which seem inappropriate to the situation. Depending on the criteria used, its prevalence in the US can range anywhere from 1.8 million to 7.1 million people.

CRYING and/or LAUGHING that is:

- Uncontrollable
- Exaggerated
- Doesn't match internal feelings
- No link to underlying thoughts
- Lasting seconds to minutes

CAUSES of PBA:

- Stroke
- Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS)
- Multiple sclerosis (MS)
- Traumatic brain injury
- Alzheimer's disease
- Parkinson's disease

Often confused with DEPRESSION, however:

- Between PBA episodes, mood is normal
- Depression symptoms are not brief
- People with depression have persistent sadness

PBA can be quite stressful for patients and those around them. If you think you or a loved one has PBA, please contact your doctor. Understanding the treatments available can help. [Learn More](#)



References

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3. Yasgur BS. Uncontrollable Crying or Laughing: What's Behind Pseudobulbar Affect? *PsychiatryAdvisor.* July 2015. <http://www.psychiatryadvisor.com/neurocognitive-disorders/pseudobulbar-affect-uncontrollable-laughing-crying/article/424362/3/>