



Lydia Salinas
Loma Linda, CA
Born 1968
Diagnosed 1977

“Educate yourself. Epilepsy is a medical condition that requires treatment by a licensed neurologist. I have no doubt that modern medicine has made a major difference in my life. I would not be where I am today without it.”

Lydia Salinas grew up in a family that taught her it was inappropriate to discuss medical issues. Though she began having seizures at an early age, her mother was unable to explain the condition to her, and Lydia could not understand why she was different from her brothers and sisters. Although she tried taking medication, Lydia continued to experience tonic-clonic and partial seizures. For more information about epilepsy and seizure types, see [About Epilepsy](#).

Desperate for a cure, Lydia’s mother took her to a witch doctor in Mexico, who told her that the cures he attempted weren’t working because Lydia’s faith in God was not strong enough. Feeling guilty, Lydia thought that if she could believe more fervently, the seizures would go away.

As Lydia got older, however, her teachers and school nurses helped her understand that seizures are caused by a medical condition—not a lack of faith. Lydia finished school and started a family. Over the years, she tried various medications, but none controlled the seizures. She struggled to find work and support her children. Just when she was ready to give up, she began dating a loving man who encouraged her to find a different doctor. Lydia went to a neurologist who eventually suggested brain surgery. Lydia and her children were scared, but they trusted the neurologist. The surgery stopped the tonic-clonic seizures, and, today, Lydia takes medication to control the partial seizures that persisted after the surgery.

Once Lydia had better seizure control, her life turned around. Her neurologist was so impressed by her transformation that he asked her to work in his office as a receptionist. Speaking English and Spanish, Lydia was able to help Latino families understand epilepsy and the role of medical professionals. Since then, Lydia has advanced beyond her position as a receptionist. She is now an Electromyograph (EMG) technician assistant, and helps screen patients for neuromuscular diseases.

As a result of the difficulties she encountered during diagnosis, Lydia became committed to educating the Latino community about the need to seek medical care for epilepsy. She became an Epilepsy Advocate, sharing her story on EpilepsyAdvocate.com and at events across the country.



Lydia wants to help individuals living with epilepsy educate themselves and learn as much as they can about their condition. According to Lydia, “It is vital to communicate openly and honestly about epilepsy with your family and friends. Find a medical doctor you trust, who is educated about epilepsy and will work to find the best treatment for you.”