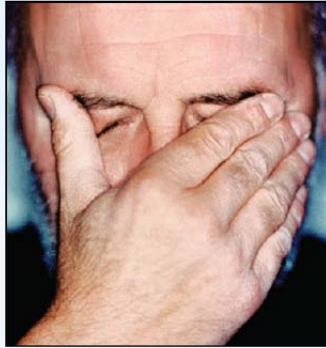


## CAUSE

Pseudobulbar affect (PBA), also known as emotional lability, is a neurologic disorder that causes involuntary and unpredictable episodes of crying, laughing, or other emotional displays. PBA impacts people with underlying neurologic conditions. PBA episodes may occur when disease or injury damages the area of the brain that controls normal expression of emotion. This damage can disrupt brain signaling causing a “short circuit,” triggering episodes of involuntary emotional expressions.



## DIAGNOSIS

PBA is a distinct neurologic disorder, which can be diagnosed and treated separately from a person’s underlying neurologic disease or brain injury. Experiencing unpredictable, involuntary emotional displays caused by PBA can cause anxiety and embarrassment, particularly in public settings. For some people, these episodes can be so disruptive that they avoid social situations. This sometimes results in isolation, which can appear to be a sign of depression. As a result, PBA is frequently misdiagnosed. In contrast to depression, PBA episodes are often sudden, unpredictable, and contrary or exaggerated relative to the person’s mood. Some people have both depression and PBA.

## DEMOGRAPHICS

PBA can occur in people diagnosed with neurologic conditions such as multiple sclerosis (MS), amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), Parkinson’s disease, dementias such as Alzheimer’s disease, and neurologic injuries including stroke and traumatic brain injury. It is estimated that approximately 2 million people in the United States are impacted by moderate to severe PBA.



## TREATMENT

Presently no medications have been approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for the treatment of PBA. Current therapy often consists of the off-label use of anti-depressants and anti-psychotics, but the safety and efficacy of these agents in PBA have not been established. New agents designed specifically for the treatment of PBA are needed and are currently in development.



**For more information go to [www.PBAinfo.org](http://www.PBAinfo.org)**