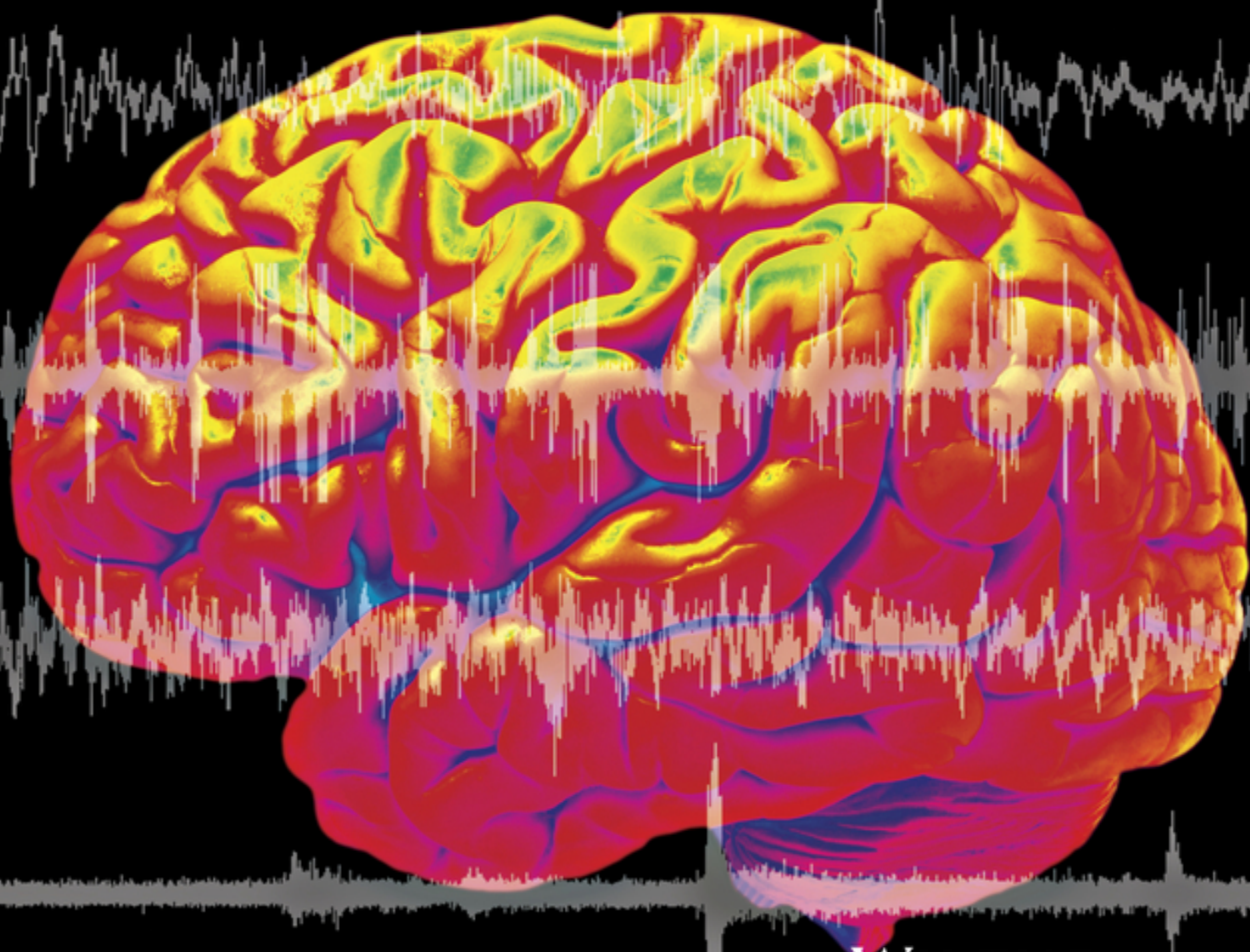


Epilepsy

and the Interictal State

CO-MORBIDITIES AND QUALITY OF LIFE

Erik K. St. Louis • David M. Ficker • Terence J. O'Brien



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Epilepsy and the interictal state

Co-morbidities and quality of life

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Preface

According to the International League Against Epilepsy (ILAE) and the International Bureau for Epilepsy (IBE), epilepsy is a disorder of the brain characterized by an enduring predisposition to generate epileptic seizures, and by the neurobiologic, cognitive, psychological, and social consequences of this condition [1]. This conceptual definition explicitly states that there is more to epilepsy than seizures. The ILAE and IBE conclude that for some people with epilepsy, “behavioural disturbances, such as interictal and postictal cognitive problems can be part of the epileptic condition...” and that “patients with epilepsy may suffer stigma, exclusion, restrictions, overprotection, and isolation, which also become part of the epileptic condition” [1].

Although it has long been known, increasing attention has recently been directed to the fact that comorbidities often add significantly to the burden of epilepsy, whether they are causative (e.g., cerebrovascular conditions or traumatic brain injuries causing epilepsy), resultant (caused by seizure, epilepsy, or its treatment), or related to a common cause underlying both the epilepsy and the comorbidity (e.g., learning disabilities or some psychiatric conditions). Such comorbidities not only add to the burden of epilepsy, but can also lead to poorer response to treatment with antiepileptic drugs, increased risk of adverse drug reactions, and even increased risk of death [2].

The theme of this book, “Epilepsy and The Interictal State: Co-Morbidities and Quality of Life,” is therefore very timely, and it addresses some of the most urgent issues for the successful management of people with epilepsy.