# Spells (Transient episodes of altered consciousness)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Developed by</th>
<th>American Academy of Neurology</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How developed</td>
<td>A survey identified the most common reasons for referral. The templates were developed after review of the literature. In addition to a dedicated work group, multiple committees where asked to review and comment.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| Additional essential patient information | • A brief summary of the case details pertinent to the referral, including family history. Please indicate in the summary if the patient has any of the following:  
  • Prolonged altered consciousness  
  • Abnormal movements with episodes  
  • Inability to stand at all due to orthostasis  
  • Chest pain or palpitations  
  • Any reported focal signs during the episode  
  • Provide:  
    • Check orthostatic vital signs if fainted with standing |
| Additional patient information, if available | Imaging and EEG (often of little value). |
| Alarm symptoms/conditions         | Prolonged altered consciousness |
| Tests/procedures to avoid prior to consult | • Imaging  
  • EEG |
| Common rule-outs to consider prior to consults | Consider cardiac causes: Check EKG and review history. If cardiac mechanism suggested, consider Holter Monitor or refer to cardiology. |
| Relevant "Choosing Wisely" elements | Do not check Ultrasound of carotids for syncope |
| Healthcare professional and/or patient resources | Healthcare Professional Information:  
  [http://www.ucdenver.edu/academics/collages/medicalschool/education/degree_programs/MDProgram/clinicalcore/emergencycare/Documents/Altered%20mental%20status%20module.pptx](http://www.ucdenver.edu/academics/collages/medicalschool/education/degree_programs/MDProgram/clinicalcore/emergencycare/Documents/Altered%20mental%20status%20module.pptx)  
  Patient Information:  