

# WHAT IS EPILEPSY?

## FACT SHEET

## WHAT IS EPILEPSY?

- Epilepsy is a condition that affects the brain.
- The brain sends messages to the body.
- Sometimes the messages get mixed up.
- This can cause a seizure.

## WHAT IS A SEIZURE?

A seizure is when the brain is not working in the usual way for a short time.

Seizures can be different for each person.





## During a seizure

You might:

- Fall down
- Shake or jerk
- Stare and not respond
- Feel confused
- Not remember
- Make unusual movements



## After a seizure

You might:

- Feel tired
- Feel confused
- Have a headache
- Need to rest

This is normal.

## WHAT CAUSES EPILEPSY?



- Epilepsy can happen for different reasons.
- Sometimes we know the cause.
- Sometimes we do not know the cause.
- It is not your fault.
- You can't catch epilepsy from someone else

## TREATMENT



People take medicine to help stop seizures.

Sometimes, the medicine doesn't stop all the seizures

It is important to:

- Take your medicine every day
- Take it at the right time
- Tell your doctor or carer if it makes you feel bad



### Staying well

You can help your brain by:

- Getting enough sleep
- Taking your medicine
- Managing stress
- Going to appointments



### Staying safe

You can:

- Tell people you trust about your seizures
- Wear a medical bracelet
- Be careful around water
- Ask for help

## WHAT TO DO

If someone has a seizure, you should:

- Stay calm, stay with them
- Keep them safe
- Put something soft under their head
- Turn them on their side when it stops
- **Do not** put anything in their mouth
- **Do not** hold them down
- Ask someone to get help if you need it

## CALL AN AMBULANCE IF



- You are worried
- The seizure lasts more than 5 minutes
- Another seizure happens straight away
- The person is hurt
- The person is having trouble breathing

**To speak to an epilepsy nurse:**

**Phone:** 1300 37 45 37

**Email:** [epilepsy@epilepsy.org.au](mailto:epilepsy@epilepsy.org.au)

**[Book a telehealth appointment](#)**

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