

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

[Book a telehealth appointment](#)

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