

Key information about epilepsy

What is epilepsy?

Your brain works by sending messages around the body using a type of electricity.

For people with epilepsy, these messages can get muddled up, which may cause the person to have a seizure.



Did you know?

Over 60,000 people under the age of 18 in the UK have epilepsy

What happens during a seizure?

When somebody is having a seizure, they might behave differently or feel strange in some way.

Some seizures affect the whole of the brain while others may only affect a part of it.

Depending on the type of seizure, a person may become unconscious or may have difficulty with other things, like speech, movement or touch.

They cannot stop what is happening to them but their brain usually only takes a short time to sort out the muddle and work properly again.

Can you stop seizures from happening?

Children with epilepsy usually take special tablets everyday called anti-seizure medication.

These are meant to stop seizures from happening, or at least make them happen less often or last a shorter time.

The tablets can make some children feel unwell, such as feeling tired, dizzy or sick.

Getting enough sleep and avoiding stress can sometimes reduce the amount of seizures a person has.

How you can help

Seeing somebody have a seizure can be scary and confusing, but knowing what to do will help you stay calm. The person with epilepsy will also feel better about going out and enjoying themselves if the people around them know how to help!

DO

1. Call for help
2. Cushion their head
3. Time how long the seizure lasts
4. Move nearby objects away
5. When shaking has stopped, place them on their side
6. Talk to them during the seizure
7. Stay with them until they are OK
8. Call 999 if the seizure lasts more than 5 minutes or they have injured themselves

DON'T

1. Panic
2. Move the person (unless there is unavoidable danger)
3. Hold the person down
4. Try to wake them up

