

Seizures/Epilepsy

What are seizures?

Seizures are caused by the brain not working properly for a short period of time. They can make you fall down (black out), get stiff, and then shake all over for a minute or two. After a seizure you may feel tired, confused, or have a headache. Seizures can happen often or only once in a while.

Epilepsy is an illness that causes seizures.

What causes Epilepsy?

- Damage to the brain before, during, or after birth
- Head injuries that can happen at any age
- Poisons such as lead or alcohol
- Infections of the brain
- Other unknown causes

How are seizures treated?

- Medicines called anticonvulsants are used to control seizures. The medicine prevents or reduces the number of seizures.
- To keep the level of medicine in your blood steady, the medicine has to be taken as directed **EVERY** day.
- Sometimes you need to take more than one medicine to control your seizures.
- Keep appointments with your doctor so the level of medicine in your blood can be checked. If the level is too low or high, the doctor will adjust your dose. **DON'T** run out of your medicine.
- Let your doctor know what other medicines you are taking. They may cause problems with your seizure medicine.
- Don't drink alcohol. Alcohol may make it impossible to control your seizures.
- If you have seizures, it is against the law to drive until your seizures are controlled.

First aid for seizures:

- Ease the person to the floor or to a flat surface
- Put something soft and flat under his/her head
- Turn him/her gently to one side to prevent choking
- Don't try to put anything into his/her mouth.
- Don't give fluids or medicine until he/she is fully awake.