

How do I look after myself if I have epilepsy?

It is very important to look after yourself. This may help you have seizures less often.

- Take your pills as your doctor tells you - the right dose at the right time. This is very important, even if you feel OK.



- Remember to eat good foods.
- Do not have much pop, sugar, chocolate, coffee, or chips.
- Do not drink alcohol.
- Sleep at least 8 hours a night.
- Rest when you are tired.
- Exercise - it makes you feel good and you may have seizures less often.
- Do things that you like to do - this will help you feel good.

If you want to talk to someone who can tell you more about epilepsy, please call the **Epilepsy Association of Calgary** at **(403) 230-2764**.



For copies of this pamphlet, contact:

The Epilepsy Association of Calgary
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Calgary, Alberta, T2K 1A2
Phone: (403) 230-2764
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or

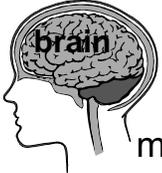
Tighe Resource Centre
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What is Epilepsy?



What is epilepsy?

Epilepsy happens in your brain. The brain is the “boss” of the body. It tells the body what to do. When



you do things like breathe, blink your eyes, hear sounds, or move your fingers, it is because your brain has sent a message to your body. When you are asleep, your brain still sends messages. You can not stop it, even if you try.

When you have epilepsy, your brain sometimes sends out too many messages, or sends messages that your body does not understand. When these things happen, you may have a **seizure**.

What does a seizure look like?

When you have a seizure, it may be so small or short that no-one sees it, or it may last longer.

If you have a seizure

- You may just stop and stare for a very short time
- You may feel like you are almost asleep
- Things may look fuzzy

- You may fall down



- You may shake
- You may suddenly feel funny or strange but you do not know why

No-one can stop a seizure. Just wait and it will end. Do not be scared. After it is over, you may not remember much about it and you may feel tired.

Why do people have epilepsy?

We do not always know. Some people are born with it. Sometimes people get it after an accident or an illness.

Can I catch it from someone?

NO. And no-one can catch it from you.

How can I help if I see someone have a seizure?

- Move tables and chairs out of the way. Make sure the person has space so that they will not get hurt if they fall down.



- Put a pillow or something soft under their head.
- Stay near and wait for the seizure to pass.
- Wait 5 minutes. If the seizure goes on longer, call 911 and ask for help.



- When the seizure is over, talk to the person softly - tell them they are OK and let them know you are there for them.
- Do NOT try to hold someone down while they have a seizure. This will hurt them.
- Do NOT try to put anything in their mouth. Some people say that you can choke on your tongue when you have a seizure. This is not true.

Is epilepsy common?

Yes. It is very common. In Calgary, there are about 20,000 people with epilepsy. That is enough to fill the Saddledome!

