

# Epilepsy

## Information for children

We've written this factsheet as a guide to epilepsy. We hope it will help to answer some of the questions you may have. Please ask any of our staff if you have further queries or need help while you are with us.

### What is epilepsy?

Epilepsy is where you have seizures. You might have to have a few tests to help the doctors decide what type of epilepsy you have and what medicines to treat you with. These can include a brain wave test (EEG) and sometimes a scan of your brain (MRI). You don't need to worry about these tests. They don't hurt and they will help the doctors find out the best way to treat you. If you would like more information about what the tests involve, please speak to your doctor.



### What is a seizure?

Your brain controls your body by sending out electrical signals. These signals travel along nerves to the muscles in your body.

During a seizure these signals sometimes get mixed up. This might make your body do things you can't control, such as shake, jerk, dribble, be forgetful, be sick or make you wet yourself.

You might not know a seizure is going to happen, but some people have a funny feeling or an upset stomach right before. Afterwards, you may feel really tired, confused or upset.

### Living with epilepsy

Most children with epilepsy can lead a normal life and enjoy activities and school like children without epilepsy.

Most children with epilepsy will either grow out of it or will stop having seizures once they start taking medicine. This is why it is important to always take your medicine when you are supposed to. Medicine is the best way to help stop your seizures.



## Things you can do to help yourself

Know what brings on your seizures.

You are more likely to have a seizure when:

- you miss a dose(s) or stop taking your medicine
- you don't get enough sleep
- you get too hot, feel ill or be sick
- you get stressed or excited (even for good things like holidays and birthdays)
- you miss meals or are hungry



## Water safety

- If possible, have a shower rather than a bath. If you do have a bath, make sure an adult is always with you, so they can keep you safe if you have a seizure.
- Keep your bathroom door unlocked, so people can help you easily.
- When you are swimming, tell the lifeguard or swimming teacher that you have epilepsy. If possible, keep your feet on the bottom of the pool.



## Road safety

- If you are walking alone, try to stay on well-lit roads.
- Cross where there's a green man or zebra crossing.
- If you are using a bike or scooter, always wear a helmet.



## Night-time safety

- If possible, don't sleep in the top of a bunk bed or on a high sleeper. This is so that people can reach you if you need help and so that you don't fall off your bed if you have a seizure.
- Don't use headphones or charge your phone while you are in bed. Move away anything else you could get tangled in if you have a seizure.
- If possible, sleep with the door open. This is so that people are more likely to hear if you have a seizure in the night.

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