

# Epilepsy Fact Sheet

## Epilepsy is...

- ✓ A **common condition** that affects the brain and causes frequent seizures.
- ✓ **Seizures** are bursts of **electrical activity** in the **brain** that temporarily cause a wide range of symptoms.
- ✓ **Epilepsy** can start at any age, but **usually in childhood** or in **people over 60**.
- ✓ often lifelong, but may get better over time.

**Memory** can be one of the key issues that affects people with epilepsy. This can be for many reasons including the **type of seizures** or the **effects of medication**



**Feelings about being diagnosed and living with epilepsy vary.** Mood problems such as **anxiety** and **depression** are

**Seizures** can affect people in **different ways**, depending on which part of the brain is involved.

Possible symptoms include:

- uncontrollable jerking and shaking, called a "fit"
- losing awareness and staring blankly into space
- becoming stiff
- strange sensations, such as a "rising" feeling in the tummy, unusual smells or tastes, and a tingling feeling in arms or legs
- collapsing
- Sometimes passing out and not remembering what happened

## Ways to help pupils with Epilepsy...

**Stress** can **trigger seizures** so ensure classrooms are **calm, nurturing and positive spaces to learn in**

**Know how to spot and deal with a seizure.** Read pupils' **Personal Care Plans**

**Make allowances** for pupils with epilepsy if they are struggling to focus, seem tired, low in mood or anxious. Do regular **wellbeing checks**

When planning lessons which include the use of **digital media**, be mindful that **flashing images** may **trigger seizures (although only 5% of people with epilepsy have 'photosensitive epilepsy')**

Because epilepsy **varies** so much from person to person, it can be helpful to find out as much as possible about a pupils epilepsy to avoid making **assumptions** about **how** their condition might **affect their learning**.

## Epilepsy is not ..

- ✗ always accompanied by special educational needs or learning problems
- ✗ **life changing** if seizures are **well controlled**. Most children with epilepsy attend mainstream schools and take part in most activities and sports

### Epilepsy :

- may **impact on attendance, behaviour and concentration**
- may cause pupils to **miss out on learning time** due to medical appointments or recovering from seizures

## Epilepsy...

Epilepsy does **not need to stop a pupil from doing an activity**, as long as they are **safe**. Those responsible for their care need to **know** how their epilepsy affects them and **what to do if a seizure happens**. This also applies to extra curricular activities

## Other Information ...

<https://www.epilepsysociety.org.uk/causes-epilepsy>

<https://www.epilepsy.org.uk/info>

<https://www.epilepsy.org.uk/involved/branches>

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/epilepsy/>

EPILEPSY  
AWARENESS

