



MEDICAL CONDITION

EPILEPTIC FIT – WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?

The second Monday in February marks International Epilepsy Day, a special event which promotes awareness of epilepsy in more than 120 countries each year.

According to the Epilepsy Foundation, “despite being one of the world’s oldest known medical conditions, public fear and misunderstanding about epilepsy persists, making many people reluctant to talk about it.”

Having said that, more often than not, “the misconceptions and discrimination can be more difficult to overcome than the seizures themselves.” For this reason alone, talking about what you can and should do in the case of dealing with someone who is having an epileptic fit, is surely fitting, especially come the **10th February 2020**.

Did you know? About 1 out of 10 people may have a seizure during his or her lifetime.

It can be frightening witnessing someone with epilepsy having a seizure, but most seizures aren’t an emergency and usually stop on their own. Although there isn’t much you can do to stop a seizure once it starts, there are a few simple steps you can take to protect someone from harm during an epileptic fit.

WebMD offers the following First Aid tips:

1. Keep other people out of the way.
2. Clear hard or sharp objects away from the person.
3. Don’t try to hold the person down or stop the movements.

4. Place the person on to his/her side, to help keep the airway clear and loosen ties or anything that may be tight around their neck.
5. Look at your watch at the start of the seizure, to time its length.
6. Don’t put anything near the person’s mouth. Contrary to a popular myth, you can’t swallow your tongue during a seizure.
7. Check to see if the person is wearing a medical bracelet or other emergency information.

It is important to stay with the person until the seizure ends and he or she is fully awake. Then help the person to a safe place and explain to them what happened.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, it is only necessary to call for emergency medical attention if one or more of these situations apply:

- “The person has never had a seizure before.
- The person has difficulty breathing or waking after the seizure.
- The seizure lasts longer than 5 minutes.
- The person has another seizure soon after the first one.
- The person has a health condition like diabetes, heart disease, or is pregnant.”

Seizures are common and it is likely that one day you might need to help someone who is having a fit. It is important to learn what you can to help keep that person safe until the seizure stops by itself.