

EPILEPSY

Some students identify epilepsy as their primary disability, but, quite often, it is secondary to another condition. Medication varies a great deal from individual to individual. Most people can find a medication to help control or lessen seizures. Medication may cause a person to talk or think more slowly and may influence a person's coordination or balance. The student should discuss with you privately any effects of medication or accommodations that may be necessary. Listed below is a brief first aid procedure for you to follow if a student should have a grand mal seizure in your presence.

FIRST AID FOR GRAND MAL EPILEPSY:

1. Remain calm. Students will assume the same emotional reaction as the instructor. The seizure is painless to the individual.
2. Do not try to restrain the person. There is nothing you can do to stop a seizure once it has begun. It must run its course.
3. Clear the area around the individual so that s/he does not injure her/himself on hard or sharp objects. Try not to interfere with movements in any way.
4. Do not force anything between the teeth. If the person's mouth is already open, you might place a soft object like a handkerchief between the side teeth.
5. It is not generally necessary to call a doctor unless the attack is followed almost immediately by another major seizure, or if the seizure lasts more than about ten minutes. Call the campus emergency number, Extension 9911, if you need assistance.
6. When the seizure is over, let the person rest if s/he needs to.
7. Turn the incident into a learning experience for the class. Explain that the seizure is not contagious and that it is nothing to fear.