

## HOW TO HELP SOMEONE EXPERIENCING A TONIC-CLONIC SEIZURE...



When experiencing a Tonic-Clonic seizure the person may go stiff, lose consciousness, fall to the ground and begin to convulse. They may also go blue around their mouth and if you're witnessing this you may feel scared. However, there are some simple things to know and do.

### Here is how to **ACT**.

**Assess the Situation:** Are they in danger of injuring themselves? Remove anything that could cause injury.

**Cushion Their Head:** Use a coat or handbag to protect their head.

**Time Check:** If the convulsion lasts longer than 5 minutes an ambulance must be called.



Once the seizure is over put them on their side in the recovery position. Stay with them and be reassuring as they come round. Never restrain the person or try to give them food or drink during a seizure.



Residents at The Meath live with complex epilepsy and associated disabilities and are supported to live as independently as possible.

In addition to living safely, residents are enabled to live fulfilled lives thanks to the dedicated staff and volunteers who recognise ability.

To find out more about our services visit  
[www.meath.org.uk](http://www.meath.org.uk)

The Meath Epilepsy Charity,  
Westbrook Road,  
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the *Meath*  
epilepsy charity

Recognising Ability

## About Epilepsy



The Meath cares for and supports  
adults with complex epilepsy  
and associated disabilities.

[meath.org.uk](http://meath.org.uk)



Registered Charity 200359

The Meath cares for and supports people living with complex epilepsy and associated disabilities in order to enable residents to live safe, happy and fulfilled lives as independently as possible. The majority of people who live with epilepsy are able to manage their epilepsy with medication and live independently at home, but it is common for epilepsy to present some major challenges and lifestyle changes.



## WHAT IS EPILEPSY?

Epilepsy is not a disability or a mental health condition. However, a person who has complex epilepsy may also have an associated disability. Epilepsy is a neurological condition, described in simple terms as the tendency to have unprovoked recurrent seizures. There are over 40 different types of seizure, and people with epilepsy can experience more than one type.

1 person in 100 is affected by epilepsy at some point during their life.

Around 500,000 people live with epilepsy in the UK. A further 87 people will have been diagnosed with epilepsy by the end of today. The good thing is that 45 of that number will become seizure free.



Unfortunately, for up to a third of those 87 diagnosed, medication and surgery will not stop their seizures and they may need some support. The Meath exists for this small proportion of people in order to ensure that, despite the challenges of complex epilepsy and any associated disabilities, every resident is enabled to live as independently as possible.

## EPILEPSY CAN AFFECT ANYONE AT ANY AGE AND FROM EVERY WALK OF LIFE.

The most likely age bracket to develop epilepsy is age 65 years and over, due to strokes and dementia. However, children can frequently be diagnosed due to genetic reasons or other causes such as the brain not developing properly, birth injury or infections such as meningitis.

There are different types of epilepsy as well as many different types of seizure.

## DIFFERENT TYPES OF SEIZURE

### Focal aware seizures

In these seizures the person is conscious and will usually know that something is happening and will remember the seizure afterwards.

### Focal impaired awareness seizures

In these seizures the person's consciousness is affected and they may be confused. They might be able to hear you, but not fully understand what you say or be able to respond to you.

### Generalised onset seizures

These seizures affect both sides of the brain at once and happen without warning.

### Tonic clonic seizures

Where a person will jerk and shake as their muscles relax and tighten.

### Atonic seizures (sometimes called drop attacks) and tonic seizure

The person's muscles will suddenly relax, they will become floppy and they often fall.

### Myoclonic seizures

Myoclonic means 'muscle jerk'. Muscle jerks are not always due to epilepsy (for example, some people have them as they fall asleep).

### Absence seizures

Absence seizures are typical absences or atypical absences. During a typical absence the person becomes blank and unresponsive for a few seconds. Atypical absences are similar to typical absences but they start and end more slowly, and last a bit longer.



Being diagnosed with epilepsy can be a scary and confusing time. A person who lives with epilepsy may have seizure triggers and, if so, may choose to pay closer attention to diet, exercise and how much sleep they get. Life-style changes often also include not being able to drive, a UK driving licence holder will usually need to be seizure free for a minimum of 1 year before being able to drive.

Due to their epilepsy people may find that they need to rely on friends and family more at certain times. Epilepsy Action is a national charity which runs local support groups. For further information about joining a support group visit: [www.epilepsy.org.uk](http://www.epilepsy.org.uk)

With the right medication, support and safety measures, people who live with epilepsy can live a fulfilled and independent life.