Epilepsy

Epilepsy is a medical condition that causes altered awareness, with or without muscle movement. Epilepsy is another word for seizure disorder. An EEG or brain wave test may be needed to diagnose epilepsy. Most of the time there is no specific cause for epilepsy. Head injuries, stroke and tumors may all cause epilepsy. Not all seizures are from epilepsy. Seizures in children may be caused by a high fever. Adults may have seizures from alcohol and drug abuse or from a low blood sugar. These seizures are not caused by epilepsy.

The most common cause of seizures in patients with epilepsy is not taking the anti-convulsant medicine prescribed to prevent them. Blood tests are used to adjust the dose of many seizure-prevention drugs. Do not ride a bike, drive a car, go swimming, climb ladders, or operate dangerous equipment unless your caregiver approves. If you hold a driver's license, state laws require you obtain special permission to operate a vehicle when you have epilepsy. Any loss of consciousness in drivers may have to be reported to the state motor vehicles office. **If you think you might be about to have a seizure, stop your car and lie down right away to protect yourself and others.**

Wear an emergency medical identification bracelet with information about your epilepsy. **Your friends and family should know what to do if you have a seizure**. It is best not to try to restrain a person having a seizure or to force anything into their mouth trying to open the jaw. After a seizure, the patient should be rolled on their side to protect the airway from secretions or vomit. A period of confusion or drowsiness after a seizure is typical. If a seizure lasts for more than 5 minutes, or if the confusion after lasts more than half an hour, you should receive immediate medical attention. **Bystanders should call for ambulance assistance.**
YOU NEED IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE.

Document Released: 01/25/2006 Document Re-Released: 03/16/2010
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