

Let's Learn About Epilepsy

An Activity Book for Children

The logo for Epilepsy South Africa, featuring the word "epilepsy" in a bold, black, sans-serif font, with "SOUTH AFRICA" in a smaller, red, sans-serif font below it. A small red flame icon is positioned above the letter 'i' in "epilepsy". The logo is mounted on a white rectangular piece of paper with grey corner tabs, which is pinned to the green chalkboard.





EPILEPSY AND THE BRAIN

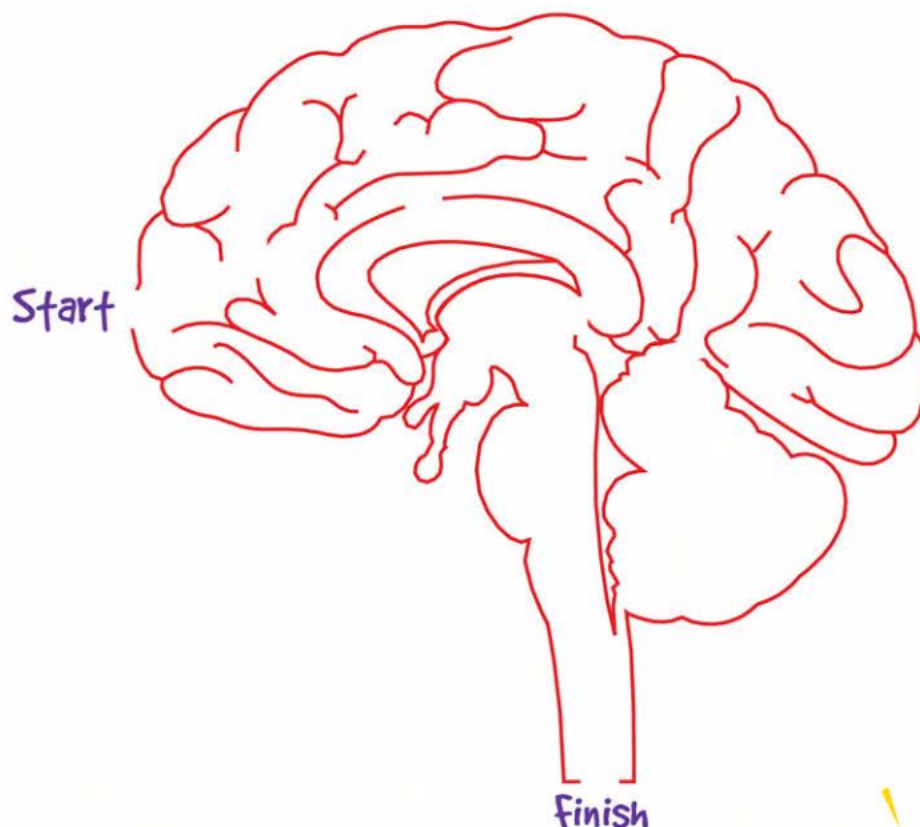
Your brain is made up of billions of tiny nerve cells. These cells send messages to each other and to other parts of your body. Nerve cells in different areas of the brain control different parts of the body. For example, some nerve cells send messages to the arms or legs. Others control hearing and seeing.

Your brain sends the message for your foot to kick the ball when you are playing soccer, for your hand to go up when you want to answer a question in school, and for you to smile when you meet a friend.

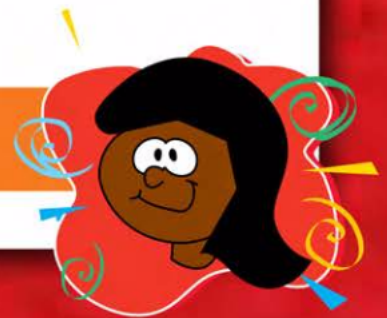
If you have epilepsy, the nerve cells sometimes become too active and they send messages that you don't want. When this happens, you have a seizure.

Having a seizure is a bit like getting confused in a maze. Once in a while, the nerve cells in your brain become a bit confused or too active for a brief moment and send the wrong message to other parts of your body. Most of the time, however, your brain sends the messages you want.

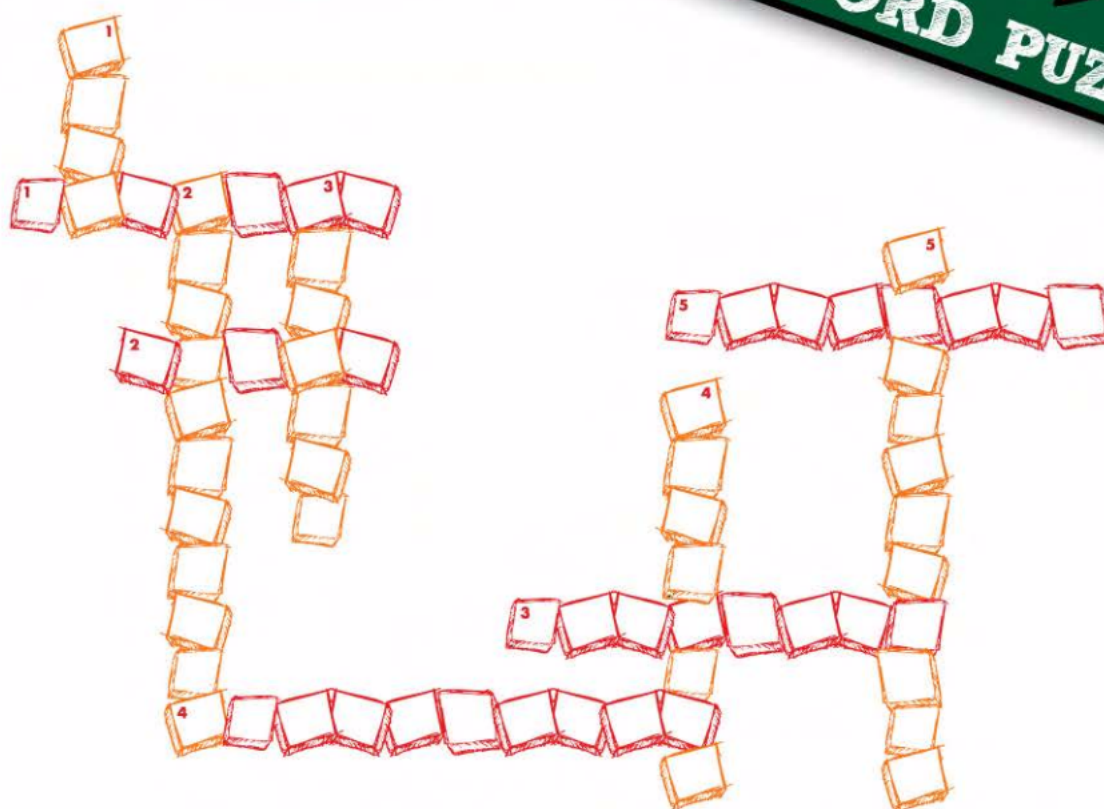
Help the nerve cells in the brain find a path to send messages to other parts of the body.



"A seizure happens when the nerve cells in the brain send out a mixed up message."



CROSSWORD PUZZLE



absence
neurologist

aura
partial

convulsion
teaching

epilepsy
tired

medicine
tonic clonic

ACROSS

1. When a seizure occurs in one part of the brain and not in the whole brain it is called a _____ seizure.
2. Sometimes a person is _____ or confused after a seizure.
3. _____ others about epilepsy helps them to understand the condition and to know how to help if someone has a seizure.
4. A _____ causes a person's body to shake.
5. A person with _____ has seizures.

DOWN

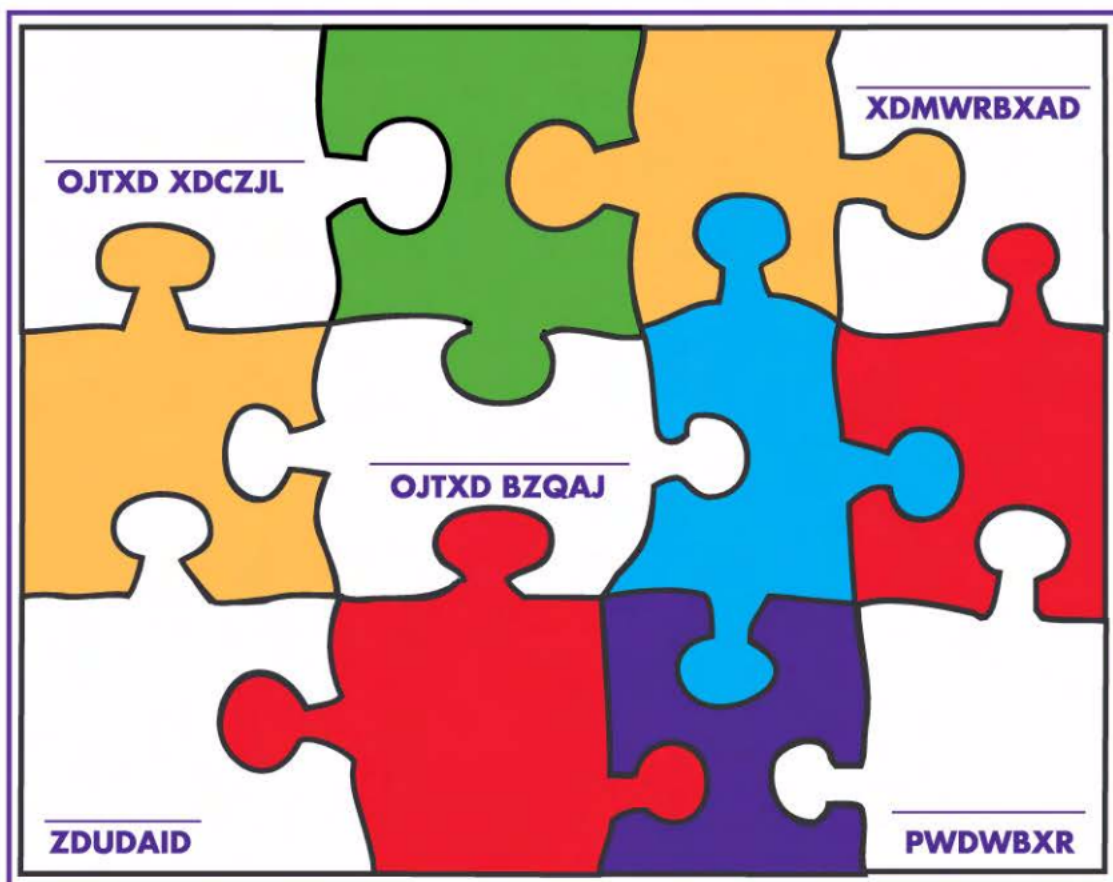
1. A little seizure that causes a person to have a strange feeling, movement, or sensation like suddenly feeling dizzy or sad, jerking a leg, or smelling something that isn't there is called an _____.
2. A _____ seizure causes a person to fall down and shake.
3. When people have _____ seizures, it seems as if they are daydreaming.
4. Most seizures are controlled with seizure _____.
5. A doctor who has studied the brain is called a _____.

WHAT CAUSES SEIZURES?

People of all ages around the world have epilepsy. Epilepsy isn't a disease that you can catch from someone else. It is a condition that results in a person having seizures.

Seizures are caused by a number of things. Sometimes a cause for seizures cannot be found.

Can you unscramble the code and complete the puzzle to find out some of the reasons why people have seizures?



A = O	E = Z	I = W	M = F	Q = M	U = K	Y = P
B = T	F = H	J = R	N = D	R = C	V = L	Z = U
C = J	G = Q	K = X	O = B	S = V	W = E	
D = N	H = S	L = Y	P = G	T = A	X = I	

"You can't catch epilepsy from someone."



AVOIDING SEIZURES

For people with epilepsy, certain things are known to increase the risk of having **seizures**. These are called seizure **triggers**.

When people know that something could result in a seizure, they can try to avoid it. For instance, if a person with **epilepsy** doesn't get enough sleep, then he or she is more likely to have a seizure.

It is important for people with epilepsy to:

- Always take their seizure **medication** as prescribed.
- Get enough **sleep**.
- Not miss **meals**.
- Avoid situations that cause too much **stress**.
- Avoid flickering **lights** from computers or television if they have a certain type of epilepsy known as **photosensitive** epilepsy.

Can you find the highlighted words in the word search below? Words can be found printed up, down, diagonally, across, and even backwards in the puzzle.

M	S	S	E	R	T	S	L	N	S	Q	V	N	F	L	K	J
S	A	T	Y	I	R	E	H	P	W	O	T	Z	U	T	S	E
V	L	T	S	E	I	Z	U	R	E	S	H	S	N	T	T	H
E	P	A	P	M	G	W	M	K	J	C	B	G	H	U	X	N
F	W	N	E	E	G	U	O	E	H	C	L	G	J	I	I	E
D	V	E	L	M	E	D	I	C	A	T	I	O	N	A	R	S
L	T	P	I	J	R	L	M	S	R	L	N	B	R	X	C	Z
R	Y	U	P	L	S	K	S	F	J	E	S	B	H	A	J	D
S	Z	X	E	V	I	T	I	S	N	E	S	O	T	O	H	P

"It is very important for people with epilepsy to take their seizure medication and to get enough sleep."



ACTIVITIES

People with epilepsy can participate in almost all sports and activities and can have fun just like their friends.

Circle some of the things that will make activities safer for those with seizures in the picture below.



"Having epilepsy doesn't stop you from having fun just like your friends."

BEING A FRIEND

Just like snowflakes, each person in the world is different. That's what makes meeting people and making new friends so much fun. Friends accept and love each other for who they are. Friends accept the differences.

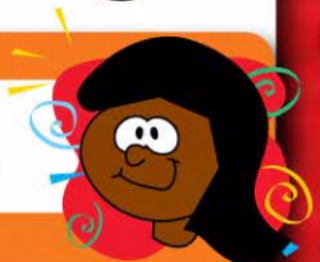
If you have epilepsy, then talking to your friends about your seizures will help them to understand and not to be afraid if you have one. It will also help them to know what to do if you have a seizure when you are with them.

Anyone can have a seizure but having epilepsy means that you have had more than one seizure.

Some children have conditions like food allergies or asthma that may require medication or extra caution too. Asking them about their condition will give them the chance to explain what to do if they need help.



"Sometimes a seizure can look scary if the person falls down and shakes. Once you understand that a seizure is something the body needs to do and that it will soon be over, you don't have to be afraid."

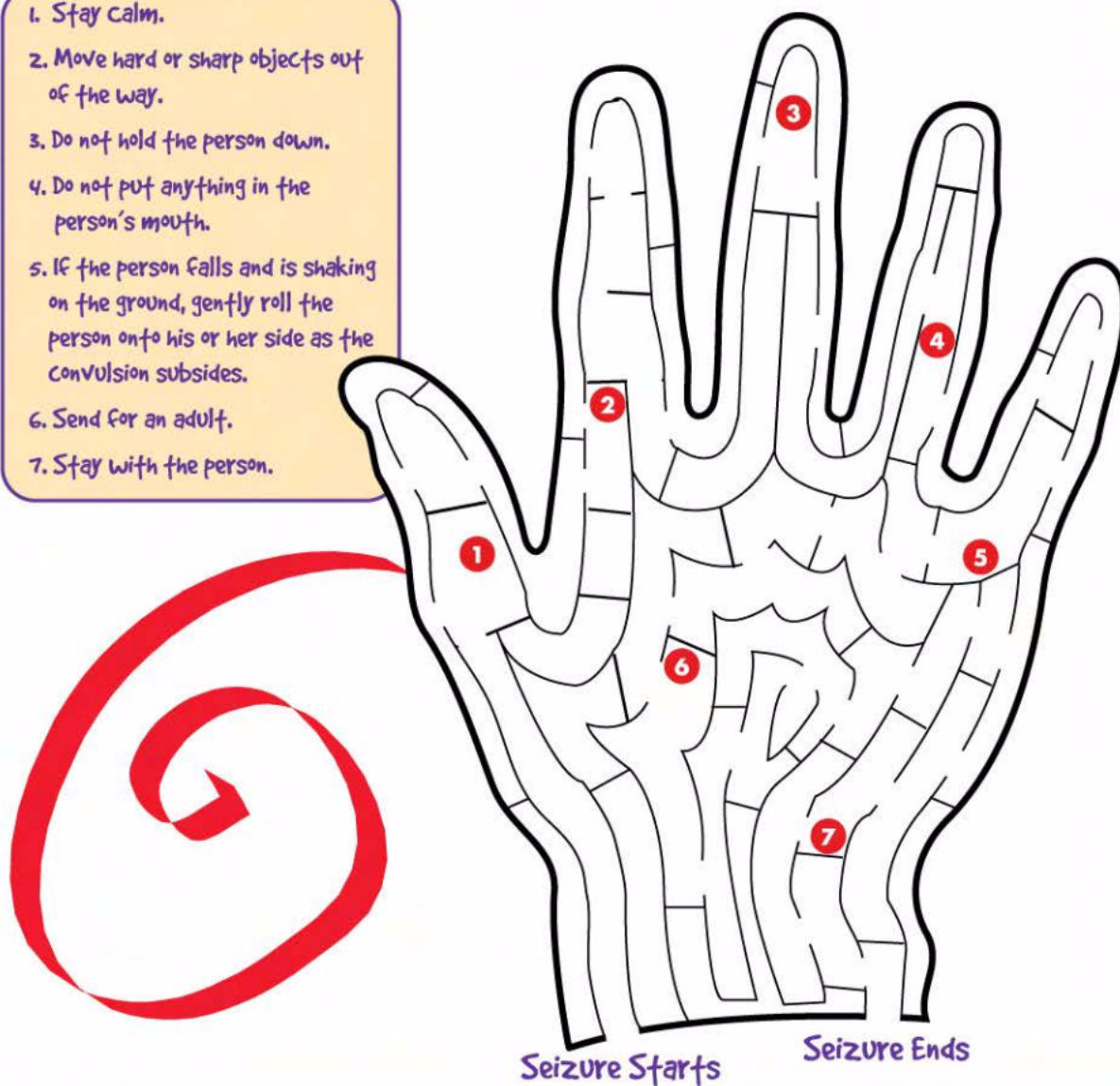


BE A HELPING HAND

There are some things that you can do to help a person who is having a seizure. Most seizures last only a few seconds or minutes. Sometimes a person is a bit tired or confused after having a seizure.

Complete the maze below to learn what you can do to help a person who is having a seizure.

1. Stay calm.
2. Move hard or sharp objects out of the way.
3. Do not hold the person down.
4. Do not put anything in the person's mouth.
5. If the person falls and is shaking on the ground, gently roll the person onto his or her side as the convulsion subsides.
6. Send for an adult.
7. Stay with the person.



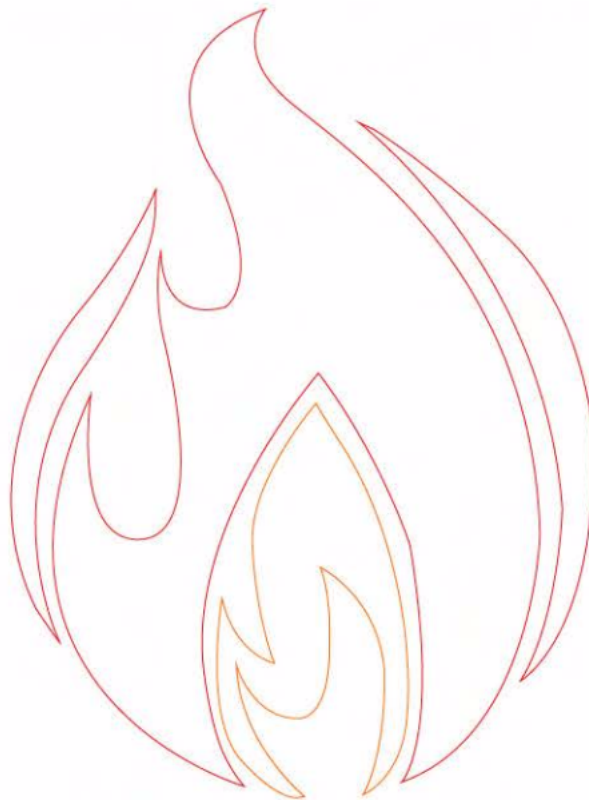
"A person who is having a seizure cannot swallow his or her tongue. Never put anything in a person's mouth during a seizure."

ENJOY THE WORLD AROUND YOU

National Epilepsy week is held annually in June and National Epilepsy Day is on 21 June every year. During this week awareness is raised about epilepsy for everyone to learn more about the condition.

People with **epilepsy** are often told that they can't do the same things as other people. This is called discrimination. When you learn more about **epilepsy** you'll know that children who have it can play sport and participate in school activities just like you can. More knowledge about **epilepsy** is like a flame that burns in the darkness of discrimination.

Colour in the flame below, and let your flame burn for epilepsy!



What is your flame burning for? (Fill in the missing letters)

e i e y
SOUTH AFRICA

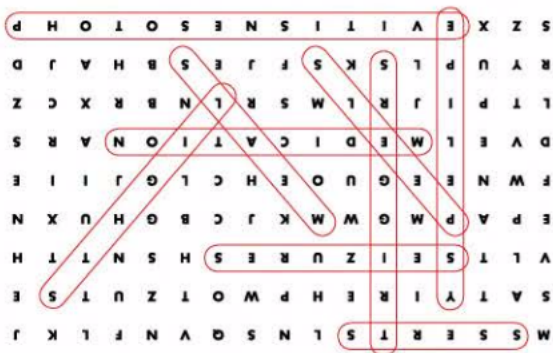




www.epilepsy.org.za
0860 374 537

Circling things that will make activities safer (Activities)

Wear a helmet when bicycling.
Tell your coaches about your epilepsy so that they will know how to help if you have a seizure.
Take a water bottle with you to avoid becoming dehydrated.
Never swim alone.



Word Search (Avoiding Seizures)



CITY OF CAPE TOWN
ISIXEKO SASEKAPA
STAD KAAPSTAD

Answers

Word Scramble (What Causes Seizures?)

OJTXD XDCZL - Brain Injury
XDMWRBXAD - Infection
OJTXD BZQAJ - Brain Tumor
ZDUDAD - Unknown
PWDWBXR - Genetic

DOWN:
1. aura
2. tonic clonic
3. absence
4. medicine
5. neurologist

Crossword Puzzle
ACROSS:
1. partial
2. tired
3. teaching
4. convulsion
5. epilepsy

