



Questions and Answers for children

Hi!

My name is Little Poss and I am the mascot of Epilepsy Queensland.

I have epilepsy and when I was first diagnosed I was very frightened because I didn't understand it.

So that you don't have to feel frightened, I have made up this sheet with some information which will hopefully answer some of the questions that you have about epilepsy.

Q. What are seizures?

- A. A seizure is a sudden burst of electrical signals in the brain, a bit like some thunder or lightning. There are many different types of seizures – over 60 kinds, in fact! Some kinds of seizures make you fall down and shake all over, and another kind makes you stop what you are doing and stare. Sometimes, only part of the brain may have the burst of electrical signals so only part of the body, like an arm or a leg, will move on its own. The seizures only happen sometimes. When you have a seizure, the doctor might tell you that you have epilepsy. Each type of epilepsy has its own name and your doctor will be able to tell you what the name of your epilepsy is.

Q. Does epilepsy hurt?

- A. A person who is having a seizure can't usually feel anything during the seizure. If a person who has a tonic-clonic seizure falls and hits themselves on something, they may feel some pain and discomfort after the seizure. They are mostly very tired and may need a big sleep.

Q. Does medicine stop the seizures?

- A. There are lots of good medicines for different types of seizures. Your doctor will choose the right medicine for your type of seizure. In about 80% of people with epilepsy, the medication will stop the seizures, or at least make you have fewer seizures.

Q. Will I grow out of epilepsy?

- A. There is no way of knowing whether a person's seizures will disappear when they get older. Some children's seizures go away and some will have seizures all of their lives.

Q. Can my friends at school catch epilepsy from me?

- A. No one can catch epilepsy. It can not be passed on from one kid to



another so you can't catch it from a friend and no one can catch it from you.

Q. Can I still do all the things I did when I didn't have epilepsy?

- A. Most kids with epilepsy can do the same things they did before they started having seizures. You can still ride your bike, play sport and other games. Sometimes though, you may need to be careful. When doing things like swimming, it is good to have a buddy who knows what to do if you have a seizure, to stay close to you in the water. If you are worried about certain things, talk to your doctor, a parent, or another adult.

Q. What are some important things that I should remember about epilepsy?

- A. You can't swallow your tongue while having a seizure. Epilepsy does not happen because you do something bad. It just happens. Having epilepsy doesn't change how smart you are. Epilepsy is something that you have, not who you are. It is just a part of your life.

Q. If I saw someone having a seizure that makes them fall down and shake, what do I do?

- A. Move things out of the way. Tell other children not to be afraid. Send someone to get a grown up. Put something soft under the person's head and roll them on their side. Be a friend to them when they wake up.

Visit my website at
www.littleposs.com.au

Hey Kids,

Why not join my club!
The Little Poss club is a club for children aged 0 to 12 years.

Call Epilepsy Queensland for more information on
(07) 3435 5000 or 1300 852 853 (outside Brisbane)

References:

Little, A. (1994). And down went Poss. Epilepsy Queensland Inc: Brisbane.
Marshall, F. (1998). Your Child: Epilepsy Practical and Easy-to-Follow Advice. Element Books Limited: Dorset.
www.epilepsy.ca/eng/child
www.epilepsy.com/children

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