



MONDAYS WITH
D R **MARK &** D R **MICHAEL**

Monday, April 29, 2024 | 1:00 – 1:45PM

TOPIC #22
Epilepsy: A Conversation for Employers



Guest speakers:



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Chief Outcomes Officer
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Epilepsy Foundation of America



A Seizure is...

- Symptom of a disturbance in the brain
- Sudden surge of abnormal electrical discharges in brain
- Can be symptom of many medical problems, including strokes or brain injuries

Every brain has the potential to have a seizure



What is epilepsy?

- Two or more unprovoked seizures or
- One seizure with a high likelihood of having more

Not everyone who has a seizure has epilepsy

Fisher RS et al. *Epilepsia* 2014;55(4):475.

Epilepsy by the #'s

Epilepsy can affect anyone. Any brain can have a seizure

3.4
Million

3.4 million people and their families are affected by epilepsy in the U.S.

1 in 10

1 in 10 people will have a seizure during their lifetime

470
Thousand

470,000 children have epilepsy in the U.S.

21%

21% of adults with epilepsy can't afford their medications

1 in 26

1 in 26 people will be diagnosed with epilepsy during their lifetime

1 in
1,000

1 out of 1,000 adults die each year from sudden unexpected death in epilepsy (SUDEP)

Change our Epilepsy Story

Insights that informed the
campaign



1.

Misunderstanding and misinformation about seizures contribute to continued feelings of stigmatization and negative outcomes for people with epilepsy

2.

People with epilepsy may experience felt stigma which leads to shame about their condition and fear of discrimination if they talk about it

3.

Misconceptions and attitudes about epilepsy are more prevalent in those with less education, and no exposure to people with epilepsy


4.

Gaps in knowledge about epilepsy and seizures exist among racial and ethnic groups, as well as those with low socio-economic status

5.

Peer support can be a powerful and effective strategy to reduce stigma

Philadelphia Assets & Messages



EPILEPSY
FOUNDATION

My seizures
can last minutes.

Not talking about
my epilepsy could
last a lifetime.

Let's #ChangeOurEpilepsyStory
epilepsy.com/ChangeOurStory




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My seizures
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Seizure With Confusion or Not Aware

Focal Impaired Awareness Seizure

- Not aware or confused
- May have blank dazed stare
- AUTOMATISMS (repeated purposeless movements)
- Clumsy movements
- May not be able to talk
- Often followed by tired, headache, nausea
- May become combative if restrained



LENGTH:

1 to 3 minutes

May be confused with:

Substance abuse

(alcohol, illicit drugs)

Aggressive behavior

Mental health problems

Focal Impaired Awareness Seizure



*Courtesy of Epilepsy
Foundation
and CBS Cares
#ShareMySeizure*

Lack of Sleep

Stress

**Alcohol and
Recreational Use**

Hormones

Missed Medications

Sensitivity to Light

**Over the Counter
Medications**

**Nutritional
Deficiencies**

Illness

Seizure Triggers

Seizure First Aid

1

STAY with the person until they are awake and alert after the seizure.

- ✓ **Time** the seizure
- ✓ Remain **calm**
- ✓ Check for **medical ID**



2

Keep the person **SAFE**.

- ✓ Move or guide away from **harm**



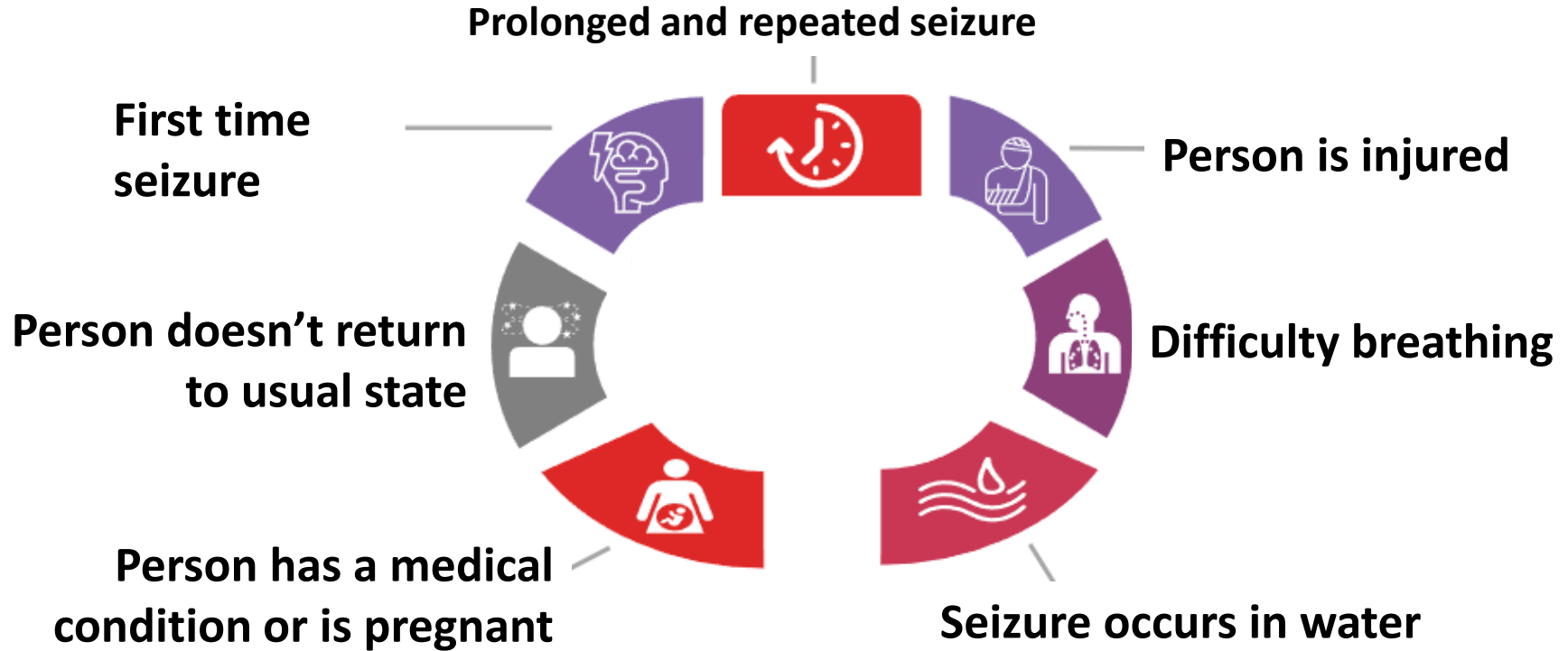
3

Turn the person onto their **SIDE** if they are not awake and aware.

- ✓ Keep **airway clear**
- ✓ **Loosen tight clothes** around neck
- ✓ Put **something small and soft** under the head



When To Call For Emergency Help



What NOT To Do

1

Do NOT restrain or forcibly hold the person down



2

Do NOT put any objects in their mouth



3

Do NOT give water or food until person is awake and able to swallow



Follow Seizure Action Plan

Rescue Therapy may be used as prescribed by health care provider

Legal Coverage of People with Epilepsy

- People with epilepsy are protected from discrimination in employment under the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. This is true even if the employee is seizure free.
- Applicants cannot be asked any disability-related questions during the application and interview process.
- You should not presume that an applicant or employee with epilepsy will need any accommodation to safely perform the job in question.

Legal Issues

- If an employee comes forward and requests a reasonable accommodation, the employer has a legal obligation to engage in that process in good faith. In fact, if the employer is found to have engaged in the reasonable accommodation process in good faith, they may be relieved from paying compensatory damages even if a court finds that the employer was wrong in denying the accommodation.
- Employers are entitled to assert that a reasonable accommodation should be denied because it constitutes an undue hardship (financial or business disruption).

Questions

Upcoming NEBGH events

- **May 2** - Developing and Implementing a Global Mental Wellbeing Strategy
- **May 9** – Creating a Menopause-Supportive Work Environment
- **May 13** – Mondays w/ Dr. Mark & Dr. Michael
- **May 16** - Your Leave Administration “Plan B”: What to do if the Leave Manager Leaves?
- **May 21** – Shh! What Women Don’t Tell You About Their Health
- **June 20** – Reshaping Care and Culture: Health and Benefits Innovation