



# HEALTH AWARENESS

## Understanding Epilepsy

(NAPSA)—People with epilepsy are finding new and effective ways to deal with their condition. The news is significant, considering that the disorder affects two and a half million Americans (at a cost of \$12.5 billion annually), and that 10 percent of the U.S. will experience a seizure during their lifetime.

Doctors say the key to helping people with epilepsy manage their medical condition is to better understand it. The Epilepsy Foundation offers this breakdown.

### Epilepsy 101

Epilepsy is a noncontagious, treatable disorder. It's characterized by epileptic seizures that are caused by brief disturbances in the brain's electrical activity. While seizures can sometimes be alarming, they are usually not dangerous. The seizures tend to last one to two minutes and seldom require medical attention. However, it is still important for people to know basic seizure first aid.

### Seizure First Aid

- Cushion the head, removing glasses if necessary.
- Loosen tight clothing.
- Turn the person on his or her side.
- Time the seizure with a watch.
- If longer than five minutes, call for medical help.
- Do not put anything in the person's mouth.
- Look for a medical I.D.
- Do not hold the person down.
- As the seizure ends, offer help and comfort.

### Facts About Epilepsy

- Epilepsy affects two and a half million Americans
- Ten percent of Americans will experience a seizure in his or her lifetime
- 181,000 cases of epilepsy are diagnosed each year
- Epilepsy is not contagious
- Epilepsy is treatable



### Living With Epilepsy

Despite the fact that 181,000 cases of epilepsy are diagnosed each year, people living with the condition are often stigmatized. One Epilepsy Foundation survey found that nearly four in 10 teens think kids with epilepsy are likely to get picked on or bullied more than other kids. Adults with epilepsy may also face negative reactions to their condition—at the workplace, in public, even at home.

The Epilepsy Foundation recently partnered with actress Garcelle Beauvais-Nilon ("NYPD Blue," "The Jaimie Foxx Show") to help teach people with epilepsy ways to better manage their condition—and to educate Americans about the disease. The group sponsors initiatives, contests and events, all in an effort to remind people that epilepsy is common, and that the more we know about it, the more treatable epilepsy will become.

For more information, visit [www.epilepsyfoundation.org](http://www.epilepsyfoundation.org).