What’s Happening to Me?

Understanding Epilepsy and Seizures

Family Services
• Our brains control everything we do.
• If we think of our bodies as cars, our brains are the drivers behind the wheel!
• Our brains have lots of parts, and each part controls a different part of what we do: moving, reading, talking, sleeping... everything!
• Our brains work by sending **electrical signals** to the rest of our bodies to tell it what to do, on paths called **nerves**.
For example, when you kick a soccer ball, your brain sends **electrical signals** to your leg and your foot so you can kick it as hard as you can!
• But if something goes wrong with these electrical signals, sometimes a seizure can happen.

• Seizures usually happen without any warning even when you might be feeling great.

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• You might even be in the middle of doing something fun like riding a bike!
Lots of different things can happen to you when you have a seizure...

- This usually happens because too many signals are firing at once so your brain becomes overloaded.
- OR a signal is blocked so it can’t travel on its regular pathway.
• A lot of times you might begin to **convulse or shake** because the electrical signals can’t control your muscles.

• **Don’t be afraid!** Your parents, teachers and friends will be there to help you.
Sometimes you might all of a sudden feel very out of it, and **may not be able to respond** to people around you.

Your friend might be talking to you, but it might be hard for you to understand.

You might even pass out, or **not remember** what happened to you.
• If you have **epilepsy**, that just means you have a tendency to have seizures.
• Don’t worry!
• Epilepsy isn’t contagious and it doesn’t hurt.
People like you who have epilepsy are just like everyone else, you just need some extra help from medicines or doctors to try to make sure you don’t have seizures.

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• Just like how your friends who have glasses are healthy and normal, they just need a little extra help to see better.
• You might feel scared after you have a seizure.
• Or you might feel different because you have epilepsy.
But remember... you are just like everyone else!