

## Epilepsy Queensland urges all older Australians to Get Seizure Smart

The **Get Seizure Smart** campaign asks the questions – Would you recognise the signs of a seizure? Could you help if someone you love or care for had a seizure?

The most common age for people to be diagnosed with epilepsy is after 60 years. However, epilepsy is not always what comes to mind when an older adult has a seizure. This is because symptoms can resemble other conditions common to this age group. This may include stroke, head injury, brain tumours, heart disease or dementia. Sometimes seizure symptoms are mistaken for just getting older.

By recognising the signs of a seizure and knowing how to respond, you can help to protect your loved one from injury and even save their life!



For Mike, aged 72 years, unusual feeling and movement in his arm were the first signs he was having a seizure. Despite being at a higher risk of seizures due to a previous stroke, Mike may have dismissed the warning signs if it wasn't for his family's insistence! "I was really surprised when the doctor told me I was having seizure activity," says Mike. I had always associated seizures with convulsions. I was prescribed anti-seizure medication, which I still take two years later."

"The signs of a seizure are not always the shaking convulsions that people expect," explains Epilepsy Educator, Jenny Ritchie. "Seizure presentation can also include subtle eye movements, changes in cognitive ability, falling to the ground or other unusual behaviours."

After you recognise a seizure, the next step is to be **Seizure Smart** and know how to respond with correct seizure first aid.



**TIME** the seizure! If the seizure lasts longer than five minutes, call an ambulance.

If it is the first time the person has experienced a seizure, you should seek medical assistance.

**STAY** with the person until they are alert or help arrives.

Stay calm and **PROTECT** the person from injury.

"This could mean moving things like hot drinks or furniture and protecting their head with something small and soft," instructs Jenny Ritchie, who has been teaching seizure first aid to Queenslanders for almost 15 years.

Visit the Epilepsy Queensland website at <https://bit.ly/GetSeizureSmart> to **Get Seizure Smart**, download the FREE Seizure First Aid guide and the Signs of a Seizure factsheet.

If you are an older Australian who has been diagnosed with epilepsy contact Epilepsy Queensland on 1300 852 853 to learn more about their "Making the Most of Later Life with Epilepsy" resources or visit <https://bit.ly/EpilepsyandOlderPeople>