



## Purple Day 26<sup>th</sup> March

Purple Day was started in 2008 by a nine year old girl named Cassidy Megan, who wanted to tell the world that having epilepsy doesn't make you different.

Epilepsy is one of the world's most common neurological conditions, affecting 50 million people globally. Yet, the greatest challenge many patients face isn't the seizures- it's the stigma and lack of understanding from those around them.

### What is Epilepsy? (The "Electrical Storm")

Think of the brain as a complex electrical grid. A seizure is like a sudden, temporary "electrical storm" that disrupts how the brain sends signals. It is NOT a mental illness, a sign of low intelligence, or a supernatural curse. It is NOT contagious. You cannot "catch" it from someone else.

Anyone can develop it at any age, though it is most often diagnosed in children and seniors.

### Myth vs. Fact: Setting the Record Straight

To support our community, we must replace fear with facts:

**MYTH:** You should put a spoon in someone's mouth to stop them from swallowing their tongue.

**FACT:** It is physically impossible to swallow your tongue. Putting objects in the mouth can break teeth or cause choking.

**MYTH:** All seizures involve violent shaking and falling.

**FACT:** Many seizures are subtle. They might look like a few seconds of blank staring, lip-smacking, or sudden confusion.

### Seizure First Aid: The "Three S's"

If you see someone having a seizure, remember: **STAY, SAFE, SIDE.**

**STAY:** Stay calm and stay with the person. Time the seizure with your watch.

**SAFE:** Keep them away from danger (stairs, sharp furniture, or traffic). Do not restrain them.

**SIDE:** If they are not awake, turn them gently onto their side (the recovery position) to keep their airway clear.

### When to call for an ambulance:

The seizure lasts longer than 5 minutes.

The person is injured, pregnant, or has difficulty breathing afterward.

It is the person's first-ever seizure.

### A Message of Hope

Epilepsy is highly manageable. Up to 70% of people can become seizure-free with the right medication. For others, advanced treatments like specialized diets, neurostimulation devices, or surgery offer new horizons for a full life.

The #EpilepsyPledge: This year, we invite you to make a pledge—to learn first aid, to speak up against a myth, or simply to treat those with epilepsy with the respect and normalcy they deserve.