

**EPILEPSY FOUNDATION OF VIRGINIA (EFVA)
P.O. BOX 800659
UVA MEDICAL CENTER
CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA 22908**

We thank Mike Fearson, Tina Greene and other members of the epilepsy network for preparing this brochure.

STUDENTS WITH EPILEPSY

Even if seizures have been well controlled in the past, some students may have an occasional seizure during their college career. The seizures and their effects can be minimized with planning and forethought.

Please find below

1. Suggestions for the school to help a student with seizures.
2. Suggestions for teachers.
3. Suggestions for the student.

1. WHAT SCHOOL STAFF AND FACULTY CAN DO FOR A STUDENT WITH SEIZURES:

Give the proper first aid and take preventive measures if the student is experiencing warning signs.

(See First Aid Information at <http://www.epilepsyfoundation.org/answerplace/Medical/firstaid/index.cfm> .)

Be caring and well informed. Explain the seizures to other students and faculty.

(See our online booklet at <http://www.efva.org/FileUploads/03EMPLOY.DOC> .)

Provide the student with a place to rest, as he or she may be exhausted after a seizure.

(See our online booklet at <http://www.efva.org/FileUploads/Caregivers.doc> .)

Be aware that antiepileptic medications may cause drowsiness and memory problems.

(See our online booklet at <http://www.efva.org/FileUploads/TAKEmed02.doc> .)

Teachers should try to encourage students to become involved in college activities. This can improve students' self-esteem and social skills.

(Check out all our “Online Booklets” on the website for more information at www.efva.org.)

2. ACADEMIC PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH SEIZURE DISORDERS AND POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS TO ACADEMIC PROBLEMS.

STUDENTS WITH EPILEPSY OFTEN HAVE PROBLEMS IN THESE AREAS

- Bad memory. (See our online booklet including tips for improving memory at <http://www.efva.org/FileUploads/MemoryTips.doc> .)
- Drowsiness.
- Missing classes/ tests.

POSSIBLE ACCOMODATIONS

- Additional time needed for tests?
- Written notes for review?
- Tutoring the student.
- More detailed lectures will enable the student to take better notes.
- Allowing the student to take a tape recorder to class, or allowing him or her to check the notes with the teacher once a week are known remedies.

Contact the Epilepsy Foundation of Virginia if a student's seizures disrupt the class. Usually there are easy solutions to this problem.

Do not penalize a student for missing a class. Offer to set up a time later for the student to take the make-up test, or give the student an open book exam. To avoid secondary gains and manipulation, ask the student to do something in return, such as bringing you books from the library, helping another student, etc.

3. WHAT STUDENTS CAN DO FOR THEMSELVES:

1. Contact the center for learning disabilities, which exists in most colleges, ask for tutoring services (see list below).
2. Do not go to class if you experience warning signs of a seizure. Stay in a safe place, such as your bed.

3. If you miss a class, be sure to tell your instructor immediately why you missed the class, read the material in the book and keep up to date. This prevents your falling behind, and reassures the teacher that you take your education seriously. Falling behind may cause higher stress levels, which may result in a lower seizure- threshold. Also it is very important that the teacher know you have a legitimate reason for missing the class and that you are willing to do the work even when you are not in class.
4. Have a "buddy" in class, who knows what to do when you have a seizure. This buddy can also help you when you miss a class.
5. Read EFVA's booklet on memory. It has good tips for improving one's memory. (You can find this booklet at <http://www.efva.org/FileUploads/MemoryTips.doc> .)
6. Educate your teachers and fellow students about seizures and seizure disorders in the first week that you are in a class. Persons who are aware will be less likely to do the wrong thing when you have a seizure. Teachers who know about your condition will be more understanding about your needs, such as retaking a test or getting an extension on a due date for a paper.
7. Take your prescribed medication every day at the same time if possible. If a medication is not supposed to be taken on an empty stomach, always try to find something to eat, even if it is just a piece of bread or a light snack.
8. Keep something to eat in your room. This way you will get some food without falling down the stairs or colliding with the kitchen counter when you have a seizure.
9. Discuss alcohol-intake with your physician. If you must drink, drink moderately, try to sip one beer or a glass of wine. Drink water to reduce your thirst before you go to a party.
10. Avoid recreational drugs.
11. Many U.S. campuses are beautiful. Find an apartment within walking distance to your classes.
12. Stress lowers your threshold for seizures. Avoid a heavy course load. EFVA has successfully argued this with several schools on behalf of students with epilepsy.
13. Talk to campus security and people you see frequently. Instruct them on what to do if you or anyone else has a seizure.
14. Always get plenty of sleep. If you expect a late night, take a nap before you go out. Avoid late nights before early classes.
15. Practice relaxation therapy. Take a walk, play peaceful music, etc. Make time to do things that you enjoy.
16. When you feel a seizure coming, use imagery, count to ten or think of something you like.
17. If you are dating, tell your partner about your seizures, the sooner the better. This will prevent any dishonesty. If someone walks out on you because of your epilepsy, let him/her walk. The person is not worth your attention.
18. Depression is a problem related to epilepsy. Never ignore the warning signs, such as:
 - feeling persistently sad, anxious, like having an "empty" mood.
 - feelings of hopelessness or pessimism.

- feelings of guilt, worthlessness, helplessness.
- loss of interest or pleasure in hobbies and activities that were once enjoyed, including sex.
- insomnia, early-morning awakening, or oversleeping.
- appetite and/or weight loss or overeating and weight gain.
- decreased energy, fatigue, feeling "slowed down."
- thoughts of death or suicide; suicide attempts.
- restlessness, irritability.
- difficulty concentrating, remembering, taking decisions.
- persistent physical symptoms which do not respond to treatment, such as headaches,
- digestive disorders, and chronic pain

19. Use common sense when choosing a recreational activity: Hiking, biking and volleyball are encouraged; scuba diving and climbing are not.
20. Some women may have more frequent seizures during menstruation. Other women may notice changes in their seizures during pregnancy. If this happens to you, keep a chart of your seizures and discuss them with your doctor.

University Name	Office Title	Contact Name	Phone #	E-mail Address	Location
Averett College	Academic Support Services	Janeen Worzbyt, Director	434-791-5629	janeen.worzbyt@averett.edu	Danville, VA
Bluefield College	Disability Services	Dr. Betsy MacClarence Steenken	276-326-4277	bsteenken@mail.bluefield.edu	Bluefield, VA
Bridgewater College	Academic Support Center	Dr. Raymond "Chip" Studwell	540-828-5370	cstudwel@bridgewater.edu	Bridgewater, VA
Christendom College	Office of the Academic Dean	Dr. Patrick Keats	800-866-5456	info@christendom.edu	Front Royal, VA
Christopher Newport University	Academic Advising Center	Deborah Q. Witt	757- 594-8763	advise@cnu.edu	Newport News, VA
Jefferson College of Health Sciences	Learning Resource Center	C. Jackson	(540) 985-8273	cmjackson@jchs.edu	Roanoke, VA
College of William and Mary	Student Disability Services	Lisa J. Bickley	757-221-2510	ljbick@wm.edu	Williamsburg, VA
Eastern Mennonite University	Academic Support Center	Joyce Hedrick	540-432-4233	hedrickj@emu.edu	Harrisonburg, VA
Eastern Virginia Medical School	Office of Student Affairs	Robert M. McCombs, PhD	757-446-5805	mccombrm@evms.edu	Norfolk, VA
Emory & Henry College	Academic Support Services	Karen Kilgore	276-944-4121	kskilgor@ehc.edu	Emory, VA
Ferrum College	Academic Resource Center	Ms. Susie Crow	540-365-4265	scrow@ferrum.edu	Ferrum, VA
George Mason University	Disability Resource Center	Dr. Stephen Greenfield	703-993-2474	sgreenfe@gmu.edu	Fairfax, VA
Hampden-Sydney College	Academic Success Services	Christa Fye	434-223-6286	cfye@hsc.edu	Hampden-Sydney, VA
Hampton University	Center for Teaching Excellence	Carolyn Sparks	(757) 727-5887	cte@hamptonu.edu	Hampton, VA
Hollins College	Office of Academic Services	Dr. Alison Ridley, Director	(540) 362-6333	deanofstudents@hollins.edu	Roanoke, VA
James Madison University	Office of Disability Services	Cheryl Lantz	(540) 568-6705	lantz1ct@jmu.edu	Harrisonburg, VA
Liberty University	Office of Academic Disability Support	Denny McHane	(434) 582-2832	wdmchane@liberty.edu	Lynchburg, VA
Longwood University	Disability Support Services	Susan Rood, Director	(434) 395-2391	srood@longwood.edu	Farmville, VA
Lynchburg College	Academic and Career Services	Jessica Baldwin, Learning Resources Coordinator	(434) 544-8152	baldwin@lynchburg.edu	Lynchburg, VA

Mary Baldwin College	Learning Skills Center	Beverly Askegaard, Director	(540) 887-7250	baskegae@mbc.edu	Staunton, VA
Marymount University	Disability Support Services	Dr. Jeffrey Leone	(703) 284-1605	jeffrey.leone@marymount.edu	Arlington, VA
Mary Washington College	Office of Disability Services	Stephanie S. Smith	(540) 654-1266	ods@mwc.edu	Fredericksburg, VA
Norfolk State University	Office of Disability Services	Beverly B. Harris, Director	(757) 823-2409	bbharris@nsu.edu	Norfolk, VA
Old Dominion University	Office of Disability Services	Sheryn Milton, Director	(757) 683-4655	smilton@odu.edu	Norfolk, VA
Radford University	Disabilities Resourc Office		(540) 831-6350	dro@radford.edu	Radford, VA
Randolph-Macon College	Disability Support Services	John Trammell, Director	(804) 752-7343	DSS@rmc.edu	Ashland, VA
Randolph-Macon Woman's College	Learning Resources Center	Tina Barnes, Director	434-947-8000 x8132	tbarnes@rmwc.edu	Lynchburg, VA
Regent University	Center for Teaching/Learning	Shauna Tonkin, Director	(757)226-4815	shauton@regent.edu	Virginia Beach, VA
Roanoke College	Fintel Library, Disabilities Services	Patty Powell	(540) 375-2292	ppowell@roanoke.edu	Salem, VA
Saint Paul's College	Center for Academic Support Services	Brigitte Mayfield, Secretary	(434) 848-6451	bmcbeth@saintpauls.edu	Lawrenceville, VA
Shenandoah University	Office of Disabilities Services	Judith Landes, Director	(540) 665-4928	jlandes@su.edu	Winchester, VA
Southern Virginia University	Student Support Center	Michael Gibbons, Director	(540) 261-4371	mgibbons@southernvirginia.edu	Buena Vista, VA
Sweet Briar College	Academic Resource Center	Laura Symons, Director	(804) 381-6278	arc@sbcc.edu	Sweet Briar, VA
University of Richmond	Office Of Student Affairs	Dr. Leonard Goldberg, VP of Student Affairs	(804)289-8032	lgoldber@richmond.edu	Richmond, VA
University of Virginia	Learning Needs & Evaluation Center	Jennifer Maegden, Director	(434) 243-5180	jm3ef@virginia.edu	Charlottesville, VA
University of Virginia - Wise	Student Support Services	Marcia Mitchell, Director	(276) 328-0265	m_mitchell@uvawise.edu	Wise, VA
Virginia Commonwealth University	Off. Of Disability Support Services	Joyce Knight, Coordinator	(804) 828-2253	jbknight@vcu.edu	Richmond, VA
Virginia Intermont College	Student Support Services	Talmage Dobbins, Director	(276) 466-7905	tdobbins@vic.edu	Bristol, VA
Virginia Military Institute	Miller Academic Center	Lt. Col. Lenna Ojure, Director	(540) 464-7765	ojurelp@vmi.edu	Lexington, VA
(VPI) Virginia Tech	Services for Students w/Disabilities	Dr. Susan Angle, Director	(540) 231-3788	ssd@vt.edu	Blacksburg, VA

Virginia State University	Student Support Services	Rosezelia Roy, Coordinator	(804) 524-5061	rroy@vsu.edu	Petersburg, VA
Virginia Union University	Academic Empowerment Center	Linda Jackson	(804) 342-3885	lrjackson@vuu.edu	Richmond, VA
Washington and Lee University	Office of Dean of Students	Dr. Dawn Watkins, Dean	(540) 458-8754	DWatkins@wlu.edu	Lexington, VA