



Our services



Our mission

The Epilepsy Foundation of Victoria is dedicated to enhancing the quality of life of people living with epilepsy through information, education, advocacy, support services and research. We work to raise awareness of epilepsy in the community to reduce stigma and create a more welcoming and inclusive society for all.

The Epilepsy Foundation provides support for people living with epilepsy and their families, to help them achieve their goals.

We offer education and training programs for health, aged care and disability services, schools and businesses, and undertake social research into epilepsy so that we can understand more about living with the condition.

Who do we help?

Anyone affected by epilepsy may access our services. We work with people of all ages and from all walks of life, from parents of children with epilepsy, to adolescents and adults with epilepsy, including older people who may be diagnosed for the first time in later life.

Our aim is to provide support whenever and wherever it is needed – whether it is helping a child to adjust to life with epilepsy at school, providing advice on lifestyle issues such as managing trigger factors, or assisting with employment and other advocacy issues.

Our services

Our services are designed to meet the individual needs of people with epilepsy and their families. We aim to support people to manage their epilepsy in a way that enables them to live, work, study and participate in the activities they enjoy, as best they can. Our epilepsy counsellors/educators will work with the person to understand their concerns and what they want to achieve and then determine how best we can help.

Information, library and resources

The Epilepsy Foundation Library contains more than 2,600 books, journals, audio visual materials and information files. The library is open to the public, however, borrowing conditions apply. The library catalogue can be accessed remotely, via a link on the Epilepsy Foundation website. Information fact sheets, epilepsy management plans and other resources are available by contacting the Epilepsy Foundation or visiting our website.

Individual and family support

Our support services are designed to meet the individual needs of people with epilepsy and their families and can include:

- Telephone and face-to-face support, which may include assistance with applications for government benefits, equipment loans and information about other community resources
- Advice and support from epilepsy counsellors/educators who understand epilepsy as a medical condition and how it affects physical, mental and social well-being
- Creation of epilepsy management plans tailored to the individual's needs and provision of seizure diaries to help people manage their own epilepsy and communicate their needs with schools, sporting clubs or in the workplace
- Case management and consultancy for individuals and families whose epilepsy proves difficult to control and who face challenges in accessing the support they need
- Support and information during visits to hospital and seizure/neurology clinics, including access to travel and accommodation information.

Support for groups

We provide opportunities for people with epilepsy and their families to get together, through self-help and facilitated groups. These opportunities enable participants to share their experiences, problems and ideas about managing epilepsy.

Our getaways for families caring for a child with epilepsy, and for adults living with epilepsy, are a chance to take a break, learn more about epilepsy and meet others experiencing the same issues.

Advocacy

We support self-advocacy and provide a voice for individuals and groups of people with epilepsy who are experiencing prejudice or misunderstanding in the community. Whether it be from schools, employers, organisations or government departments our aim is to improve government and organisation policies to ensure a better deal for people with epilepsy.

Education and training

We provide a comprehensive range of education and training programs designed to assist schools, health, aged care and disability services, government departments and the wider community to understand epilepsy and how to appropriately support, include and involve people living with epilepsy.

Our programs include:

- Developing skills in epilepsy care and management
- Seizure first aid training
- Training in the emergency management of seizures using emergency medication
- Educating teachers, principals and school communities about epilepsy (incorporating Trivia Challenge)
- Awareness and information sessions for diverse community groups, organisations and clubs
- Understanding and managing epilepsy seminars to meet the identified needs of specific groups of people and families living with epilepsy
- Self-management programs to enable people with epilepsy and their families to work together with their health provider to gain a greater sense of control of their epilepsy.

Psychological/social research

We undertake research to better understand the psychological and social aspects of living with epilepsy and to help us improve our services.

We maintain a Research Participant Register of people living with epilepsy and their families who are willing to take part in social research and recruit new participants on an ongoing basis. Contact the Epilepsy Foundation of Victoria if you are interested in joining the register.

Accessing services

Our services can be accessed over the telephone, in person, via mail or email and in a range of community settings, such as a person's home, school or workplace.

Cost

Most services are provided at no cost to individuals and families. The Epilepsy Foundation relies on government funding and donations to provide services. Some services may attract a small fee and we usually charge organisations for our training and education programs.

Individuals are welcome to become members of the Epilepsy Foundation, however, membership isn't essential to be eligible to access our services.

The Epilepsy Foundation of Victoria is a registered charity and we depend on the support of people like you. If you would like to support our work, now or in the future, please telephone **03 9805 9111** or visit **www.epinet.org.au**.

Seizure first aid

Giving help to a person who is having a seizure

TONIC CLONIC SEIZURE

Convulsive seizure with loss of consciousness, muscle stiffening, falling, followed by jerking movements.

- Note the time the seizure started and time until it ends
- Protect the head – if available use a pillow or cushion
- Remove any hard objects that could cause injury
- Do not attempt to restrain the person or stop the jerking or put anything in their mouth
- As soon as possible roll the person onto their side – you may need to wait until the seizure movements have ceased
- Talk to the person to make sure they have regained full consciousness
- Stay with and reassure the person until they have recovered

ABSENCE SEIZURE

Mostly in children, consists of brief periods of loss of awareness. Can be mistaken for day-dreaming and complex partial seizures.

- Timing can be difficult, count how many happen daily
- Reassure the person and repeat any information that may have been missed during the seizure

COMPLEX PARTIAL SEIZURE

Non-convulsive seizure with outward signs of confusion, unresponsiveness or inappropriate behaviour. Can be mistaken for alcohol or drug intoxication.

- Note the time the seizure started and time until it ends
- Avoid restraining the person and guide safely around objects
- Talk to the person to make sure they have regained full consciousness
- Stay with and reassure the person until they have recovered

CALL AN AMBULANCE

- For any seizure if you don't know the person or if there is no epilepsy management plan
- If the seizure lasts for 5 minutes
- If the seizure stops but the person does not regain consciousness within five minutes, or if another seizure begins
- When a serious injury has occurred, if it occurs in water, or if you believe a woman is pregnant

Emergency Services 000

Epilepsy Help Line 1300 852 853 | Web: www.epinet.org.au



More information

For further information about services, costs, membership or joining the Research Participant Register, please contact the Epilepsy Foundation of Victoria.

818 Burke Road, Camberwell Victoria 3124

phone +61 (0)3 9805 9111

fax +61 (0)3 9882 7159

email epilepsy@epilepsy.asn.au

www.epinet.org.au

Epilepsy Help Line
1300 852 853