



## Special Needs information sheet: epilepsy

### 1 Studying with epilepsy

Epilepsy is a paroxysmal disease which is caused by a temporary dysfunction of the cranial nerve cells.<sup>1</sup> Depending on which region of the brain is affected, a seizure involves the entire body or only individual parts of the body, such as an arm, an eyelid, etc. The symptoms are convulsions, cramps or also random movements. Patients may also have short absence seizures (impaired consciousness). Depending on the nature of the symptoms, medicine distinguishes between different forms of seizure: focal and generalised seizures.

We speak of epilepsy when the seizures are recurrent or when the EEG reveals signals that are typical of epilepsy (so-called foci). Causes can include an underlying illness of the brain, such as a tumour disease. In many cases, however, the cause remains unknown. As a rule, epilepsy is treated with drugs. In some (therapy-resistant) cases, the focus in the brain is surgically removed or a brain pacemaker is used.

The effects of activities relevant to studying differ depending on the type and severity of the epilepsy and on the duration of recovery and the after-effects of a seizure. Stress situations such as examinations can result in a higher frequency of seizures.

### 2 Information for dealing with students suffering from epilepsy

- Avoid flickering and flashing lights.
- Owing to the necessary period of rest after a seizure, students may be absent from the classroom => compensation through substitute work.
- What to do in the case of a seizure: keep the danger of injury as low as possible, i.e. remove any objects through which the patient might be injured. Never place objects in the patient's mouth, not even when he or she is making chewing movements or biting his or her tongue! If necessary, call for paramedics.
- Adaptations for examination situations are specified in writing after consultation. Procedures are stipulated on the internet page of Special Needs: [www.unisg.ch/de/universitaet/hsgservices/beratung/beratungsstellen/special+needs/nachteilsausgleich](http://www.unisg.ch/de/universitaet/hsgservices/beratung/beratungsstellen/special+needs/nachteilsausgleich) (for example, additional time and/or a separate examination room).

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<sup>1</sup> The following information refers to the following source:

<https://epi-suisse.ch/epilepsie>.

### **3 Contact**

If you have any questions and concerns, please contact the Special Needs Advice Center:  
Special Needs Advice Center; [specialneeds@unisg.ch](mailto:specialneeds@unisg.ch); +41 71 224 31 91  
or [nachteilsausgleich@unisg.ch](mailto:nachteilsausgleich@unisg.ch); +41 71 224 22 23.