

SYSTEM NAVIGATION

Epilepsy Disclosure Chart

TIME OF DISCLOSURE	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES	ISSUES
ON A JOB APPLICATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Honesty. Peace of mind. • Easy. Lets employer decide if epilepsy is an issue. • An employer may be seeking someone with a disability to diversify their staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Might disqualify you with no opportunity to present yourself and your qualifications and no recourse. • Potential for discrimination. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you use this technique, you may have a harder time finding work, but usually have no epilepsy-related problems when you do.
DURING AN INTERVIEW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Honesty. Peace of mind. • Opportunity to respond briefly and positively – in person – to specific epilepsy issues. • Discrimination less likely face-to-face. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Puts responsibility on you to handle epilepsy issues in a clear, non-threatening way. • Too much emphasis on issue indicates possible problem. You are not being evaluated on your abilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How comfortable are you with discussing your epilepsy? Are you too preoccupied with epilepsy? These are very difficult questions, but ones that you can prepare to answer. • Disclosing early on may be best for someone who will likely have a seizure sooner rather than later, and/or who wants appropriate care and accommodation

Epilepsy Disclosure Chart *continued*

TIME OF DISCLOSURE	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES	ISSUES
AFTER THE INTERVIEW (When you have been offered a job but before you begin work.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Honesty. Peace of mind. • If the epilepsy information changes the hiring decision, and you are sure that your seizures will not interfere with your ability to perform the job, there may be legal recourse. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employer might feel you should have told him before hiring decision was made. • Might lead to distrust with personnel department. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to evaluate seizure condition honestly in light of the specific tasks of the job you are applying for. • Need to be able to explain how epilepsy will not interfere with ability to perform job. This includes job safety.
AFTER YOU START WORK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity to prove yourself on the job before disclosure. • Allows you to respond to epilepsy questions with peers at work. • If disclosure affects employment status and the condition doesn't affect ability to perform job or job safety, you may be protected by law. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nervousness or fear of having a seizure on the job. • Possible employer accusation of falsifying your application. • Possibility of a seizure before co-workers know how to react. • Could change interaction with peers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The longer you put off disclosing, the harder it becomes. • It may be difficult to identify who to tell.
AFTER A SEIZURE ON THE JOB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity to prove yourself on job before disclosure. • If seizure affects employment status but the seizures do not affect your ability to perform your job or job safety, you may be protected by law. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possible employer accusation of falsifying your application. • Possibility that your co-workers will not have known how to react to your seizure. • Can perpetuate epilepsy myths and misunderstandings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationships you establish with co-workers may be hurt if they feel you have been untruthful with them. It may be difficult to re-establish trust.

Epilepsy Disclosure Chart *continued*

TIME OF DISCLOSURE	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES	ISSUES
NEVER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employer can't react to your epilepsy unless you have a seizure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If epilepsy is discovered, you run the risk of being fired. • Nervousness and fear of having a seizure on the job. If you have a seizure, might be hurt by inappropriate first aid. • Studies show that people who don't disclose have higher incidence of seizures on the job. • Can perpetuate epilepsy myths and misunderstandings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you haven't had a seizure for a long time (over two years) the issues of disclosure become less critical. • The seizures may not be an issue but medication side effects might be.

Reprinted from "The Work Book", a publication of EFA's Training and Placement Service (TAPS) program.