

Only a doctor can diagnose and treat Epilepsy!

Epilepsy Support



Tigger's Story.

My story starts in the mid 60's, just left school and joined the Army Junior Leaders, where I was hoping for a career in Electronics...well, they said nothing about firing rather large guns, things that could throw a 25lb shell 7 miles (could never get one of those in a rifle). It seems they needed more of the basic Artillery/Infantry soldier at that time. Life was a bit tough back then as I was only 15 and not used to being shouted at every five minutes or doing all the drills and exercises that suddenly was thrust upon one. Now that, after a few weeks got a fair bit easier as delicate ears hardened to the sound of sergeants screaming at you and you gained a fair few extra pounds ...in muscle! All of this was getting to be rather fun! Suddenly the bubble burst, and the bullying started and continued for another 12 months in which time I had collapsed twice in 3 months and was very generously (??) given a medical discharge.

After the army had seen me off I was getting more of these 'collapses' all at odd times after party's, after work, in my sleep oh, just about anytime out the blue. The consultant at the local general hospital had me labelled as a drunk and a waste of space and NHS funds! Then one day, I collapsed at home in the middle of the day with my parents both at home (fortunately) and they called our family Doctor in to see me. I was well out for the count and so he rang the hospital who told him there was a bed shortage, so, he rang around and found a bed for me in Walton Hospital Liverpool that was the first stroke of luck. When I got to the A & E Department in Walton I had been pumped so full of drugs with them trying to control this 'collapse' that I was having drug induced seizures. The second stroke of luck came in the form of a Doctor who was covering for another member of the A & E staff and he just happened to be a Senior Registrar in the Neurology Department. He took over and told my parents that he would like to have me transferred to the neurological department straight away as he said it was 90% certain that I had Epilepsy. In 5 years since leaving the army that was the first time that that had ever been mentioned.

I was placed under the care of one Dr Ken Slatter, a nicer man you couldn't wish to meet, definitely not your run of the mill 'I am God' consultants, I think that this is where I learned to respect but not fear some of these real obnoxious consultants. I was in Walton Neurological Department (the old workhouse) for three months undergoing neurological tests that by today's standards would seem somewhat antique to say the least, but at least they did their job and found out what was wrong with me and by some strange freak or something, I was deemed not to be a drunk or an alcoholic or any other strange label granted to a waste of NHS funds but that I actually did have Epilepsy!!

We now realise that my first seizures were not when I was 21 but probably when I was 15 or 16 and the Army did themselves...not me...a favour in getting me out with a medical discharge.

When Doctor Slatter retired, he put me under the care of a young and up and coming Doctor who specialised in Epilepsy called Doctor (now Professor!) David Chadwick and I have been under his care up to date.

I think I have been especially lucky in my care and treatment of my Epilepsy in that I have only ever had two consultant neurologists in the 36 years that I have had this illness.

This is an Epilepsy Support article that is written, not by trained medical experts such Doctors but from the experience and view point of a person with Epilepsy or who cares for a person with Epilepsy.