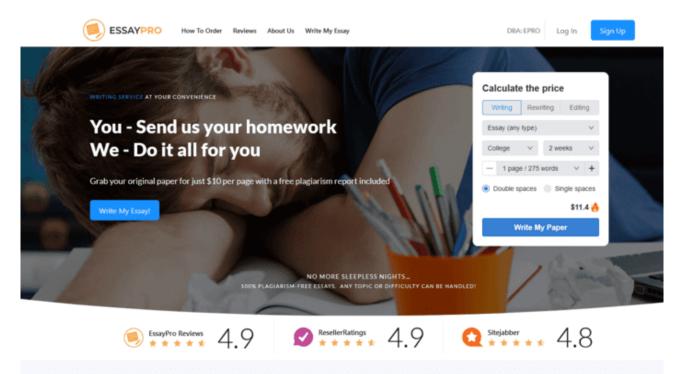
## **Living with Epilepsy**



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## Living with Epilepsy

It was a cold, rainy day. I could see most of the kids at the bus stop had winter coats and hats. The clouds were particularly low in the sky. After evading the numerous puddles in the road, I reached the bus stop and walked up to a group of friends. A girl in my class spotted me and asked, "Are you going to the dance tomorrow?"

I froze. I had forgotten about the dance and now was uncertain about whether I was going or not. "Yeah, probably," I answered. She nodded and we discussed other things, but my mind never wandered away from the question she had posed. Suddenly, the bus appeared and I climbed on and took a seat in the front. I needed some time to think.

Ever since the doctors told me I had <u>epilepsy</u>, I have lived with an added stress. When I was younger it was not as stressful as it is now that I am in high school. I know that I have become increasingly self-conscious about it. The first seizure I ever had was in fourth grade. The doctors do not know what triggered the seizure, and I do not remember it. The students and teachers told me that I screamed and lost consciousness. Then I started jerking with muscle contractions.

Later, the doctors told me I had epilepsy, specifically the type known as grand mal. Immediately, the doctors put me on some medications to prevent the <u>seizures</u>. They also gave my parents a <u>bunch</u> of packets of information about epilepsy. When I got older, some of those packets informed me that 20-25 million people have suffered from an epileptic seizure. Many people grow out of childhood epilepsy or they take medicine to control it. However, there is still a risk of having a seizure even if you take medication. Over the past few years, I have become increasingly aware of the chance of a seizure at any time.

The day after my seizure, I came to school and the kids were a little frightened of me. It only took a little time for them to forget, but the few days after the seizure were unbearable. The kids acted like epilepsy was contagious. Of course, I understand that a seizure is a dramatic and frightening event. I can only speculate at what the kids in high school would do if they saw me having a seizure.

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