

My Sister

by Micah Fong

The first time it happened, I was freaked out. The second time it happened, I was sad. The third time it happened, I felt at blame. My sister has epilepsy, a neurologic disorder. The first time she had a seizure, she was four, and my family had no idea she had epilepsy.

I was seven the first time, and my sister had been taking a nap in my parents' room. It was the day before Christmas Eve, and we were going to a Christmas concert. I was really excited, and I had my new dress on. I went with my mom upstairs to wake up my sister. When we saw her, my mom knew something was wrong. My sister's eyes were rolling around in her head, and she was shaking. Her hands were randomly scratching in the air. My parents decided to call 911. Meanwhile, my parents told me to go to our neighbors' house. By then, I was practically hysterical with worry, so my mom had to come with me to get Mrs. Clark. When we got back our house, the paramedics were there. Mrs. Clark tried to calm me down, but I wouldn't calm down. I had no idea what was going on. I didn't know if my sister was going to die or live or what was wrong with her. They took her to the hospital. My dad rode in the ambulance, and my mom and I met them at the hospital. They gave her an IV, and some medicine. She slept for a while, and then she finally woke up. I was so relieved. I started talking to her, and asking her questions. Everyone told me she was still sleepy and she wouldn't understand me, but I kept talking. Later, she was diagnosed with epilepsy. I now look upon that first seizure as one of the worst experiences of my life.

Now, when I tell my friends my sister has epilepsy, if they haven't met her, they expect her voice to sound weird, they think she wouldn't understand things a "normal" six year old would; they assume she's having seizures all the time. But although some epileptic kids have it harder, and they are a little bit like that, my sister is a regular person. She likes swimming, she does theater in the spring and soccer in the fall, her favorite color is pink, she loves dogs, and she wants to be a vet when she grows up. She is in first grade, and she takes five extra-curriculum classes. She is definitely NOT ordinary, but my mom says, "She isn't ordinary, she's extraordinary!"

Although her epilepsy isn't as bad as it could be, we still have to watch her carefully. In one of our spring shows, (I do them with her) the tech. & lighting people put strobe lights in a few of the songs. My sister isn't supposed to see strobe lights, because it increases her risk of having a seizure. Fortunately, we noticed the strobes and notified the director immediately. Our director removed the strobes from all the songs she was in. Also, my sister's doctor said her seizures were triggered by daytime naps, so we must be extremely careful not to let her fall asleep during the day or she was almost sure to have a seizure. She must also always take her medicine after breakfast and after dinner. She also is supposed to have her "emergency" medicine with her at all times, just in case she has a seizure. We've had some problems with her medicine. One day while she was on a different medication, she woke up with small red spots all over her. She looked a little like a cartoon character with measles. But it turned out to be an effect of that medicine.

My sister has epilepsy, and I didn't choose this topic to win the contest, I chose this topic so people could know that kids with epilepsy are just regular people, with regular lives.