

# Getting Smart About Seizures

November is Epilepsy Awareness Month. And, as stewards of a risky public environment, NYC Transit employees may benefit from seizures tutoring.

The Medals story above reminds us of national hero Wes Autrey's incredible act in January, when he jumped to the tracks to save a young seizure victim. Yet, how many know that the New York Film Academy student Autrey saved fell to the tracks during a *second* seizure, after Wes (photo page 2) and others on the platform thought he had recovered?

This is a key reason why Occupational Health Services has launched a seizure awareness campaign, issuing bookmarks last summer via Payroll with the tips for helping a seizure victim at right.

Epilepsy Awareness specialists stress that epilepsy affects 2.6 million Americans of all ages, races and social strata. Most get medical help when needed and lead normal lives. Yet because of misunderstandings, some seizure victims are ridiculed and discriminated against. Supreme Court Chief Justice John Roberts became the country's best-known epilepsy victim after a second seizure in July. For more information, contact the Epilepsy Institute: 212-677-8550, or Debra Josephs, The Anita Kaufmann Foundation: 201-655-0420.

## First Aid for Seizures

### Tonic-clonic seizure –possible symptoms

- Sudden cry or fall
- Rigidity, muscles jerking
- Abnormal breathing/change in skin tone
- Loss of bladder control
- Seizure lasts 30 seconds to a few minutes

Often mistaken for heart attack or stroke if person is found after seizure has stopped.

### What you can do:

- Stay calm and do not restrain the person.
- Do not put anything in the person's mouth.
- Clear the area of harmful objects.
- Roll the person on their side.
- Place something soft under their head.
- Loosen neckware/remove glasses.
- Check for a medical I.D. tag.
- If on the train, do not pull the emergency cord.
- Ask someone to notify the conductor or bus operator to call for help.
- Remain with the person until help arrives.