



Service Dog Episodic Disorders

Episodic Disorder Service Dogs (Epilepsy, Meniere, Narcolepsy, Migraine)

Episodic diseases present with symptoms that affect all areas of life. One of the most debilitating of these symptoms are: the “episodes” associated with these diseases. For example:



- Seizures
- Migraines
- Fainting Spells
- Falling asleep

It is these experiences that often place enormous restrictions on the individual and produce much anxiety. The individual often does not know when the episode will occur and consequently their safety becomes jeopardized. If a fainting spell or seizure occurred while driving or crossing the street, the situation could be fatal. Work can become difficult as tasks or presentations become interrupted during these episodes and the response of the co-workers can cause embarrassment and isolation for the individual. Even something as simple as a staircase can become a complete restriction. Service dogs can re-open these activities and environments to the individual

THE GOAL: Episodic disorders present a unique complication to the individual and the service dog trainer. The goal of episodic service dogs is that through training and exposure the dog will be able to alert to impending episodes, allowing the individual to seek safety or take rescue medication. Not all dogs can accomplish this. Trainers and science have yet to isolate the warning factors in episodic diseases. However, even if the dog never learns to “alert”, they provide many safety and comfort tasks during and after each episode.

1. The service dog can roll the person into the “left side recovery position” after a seizure.
2. They can go seek help for the person.
3. Service Dogs provide grounding and comfort as the person arouses from these episodes.
4. The service dog can also carry the rescue medication and medical information so that others will be able to understand what is happening and assist as necessary.