

What would you do if someone has a seizure?

SEIZURE FIRST AID

1. Stay Calm
2. Protect the person from injury – remove nearby objects and put something soft under the persons head
3. Roll the person onto their side.
4. **DO NOT** put anything in the mouth of a person having a seizure.
5. Time the seizure – if it lasts longer than 5 minutes, or if the person is injured, call **911**.
6. Stay with the person until the seizure is over.



CALL 911 IF:

The seizure lasts more than 5 minutes
It is a first time seizure
Another seizure starts shortly after one ends
The person is pregnant, injured, or has diabetes
The seizure happens in water

NO NEED TO CALL 911 IF:

You know the person has epilepsy *and*
There are no signs of physical distress *and*
The seizure ends under 5 minutes *and*
Consciousness returns without further incident

Medical Conditions Other than Epilepsy that Can Cause Seizures:

Diabetes – Brain Infections – Heat Exhaustion – Pregnancy
Poisoning – Hypoglycemia – High Fever – Head Injury

Some Possible Seizure Triggers are:

Missing a dose of seizure medicine	Lack of sleep	Poor Nutrition	Hyperventilation
Drug toxicity	Extreme fatigue	Overeating	Being startled
Fever or illness	Extreme heat-cold	Caffeine, sugar	Stress
Hormones	Full bladder	Low blood sugar	Fear or anxiety
	Constipation	Drugs or Alcohol	Flashing lights

RECORD OF OBSERVATIONS

What was the person doing before the seizure? _____ Did anything happen that may have triggered the seizure? _____
What happened during the seizure? _____
Did the seizure develop suddenly or gradually? _____ What part of the body moved first? Next? _____
Did the eyes flutter and blink or roll? _____ Did the skin show changes (flushed, clammy, pale, blue)? _____
Did the person talk during the seizure? _____ Could the person respond? _____ Did they lose consciousness? _____
Did the person perform any actions during the seizure? _____ Did the seizure occur on one side of the body or both? _____
How long did the seizure last? _____ Did the person lose bladder control or vomit? _____
What was the person like during the seizure (drowsy, confused, angry, unconscious)? _____ For how long? _____
How did the person behave after the seizure (alert, disoriented, sleepy, weak)? _____
Did the person remember anything that happened during the seizure? _____
Did the person experience an aura or warning sensation that the seizure was coming? _____
Was the person injured during the seizure (please explain)? _____
Additional comments _____

Epilepsy Association of WNY

o 339 Elmwood Ave o Buffalo NY 14222 o (716) 883-5396 o www.epilepsywny.org o



- ✧ **Epilepsy** is the tendency to have recurrent seizures.
- ✧ A **Seizure** is a sudden disturbance in the electrical activity of the brain that results in a change of movement, consciousness, behavior, speech, or thinking.
- ✧ **One in ten** Americans will have a seizure during their lifetime.
- ✧ **One in one hundred** has epilepsy, and anyone can experience the onset of a seizure disorder at anytime.
- ✧ People with **developmental disabilities** such as cerebral palsy, mental retardation, and autism are at a **significantly higher risk for seizures** – the likelihood of seizures increases with the severity of the disability.
- ✧ Epilepsy is a disorder of the **central nervous system**. Since your brain controls everything your body does, anything that you can do normally can also happen abnormally in the form of a seizure.
- ✧ **Status Epilepticus** is a potentially dangerous medical emergency in which a person has a prolonged seizure lasting more than 30 minutes.

HOW TO HELP

- ◆ Understand what epilepsy is
- ◆ Know the three R's:
 - **Recognize**
 - **Respond**
 - **Report**
- ◆ Have a plan of action in place
- ◆ Offer support and acceptance
- ◆ Be aware of the services available for people with epilepsy

Services offered by EAWNY

Counseling
Family Support
Case Management
Advocacy
Employment Assistance
Support Groups
Educational Programs
Neurobehavioral Treatment

Seizure Types

Tonic-Clonic (Grand Mal): two phases: stiffening and jerking, loss of consciousness, body becomes stiff and rigid, then jerks and convulsions start, temporarily suspended or altered breathing is common, entire seizure usually lasts a few minutes, often followed by confusion or sleepiness

Absence (Petit Mal): characterized by a blank stare or look of daydreaming, lasts only a few seconds, may include chewing or blinking, awareness is lost but returns quickly

Complex Partial: may begin with a trance like stare, random activities are common such as picking at clothing or lip-smacking, twitching may occur in an area of the body, usually the same set of actions occurs with each seizure, the person is generally unresponsiveness, usually lasts a few minutes