

Epilepsy and seizure management in children and young people

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In this pack we have enclosed a small amount of information about epilepsy and seizure management. This information refers to children and young people who have many different types of epilepsy and so therefore some of the information may not be relevant to you and your child. More detailed information regarding your child's epilepsy can be discussed further at a later point.

It is often an overwhelming experience to discover your child has had a seizure and a possible diagnosis of epilepsy. Our team would like you to know that you and your family are not on your own. Support is offered in many different ways, this will be part of a journey for however long that may be for.

Safety issues

Swimming

It is absolutely fine to go swimming, however, a responsible adult/friend must be present to keep an eye on you whilst in the pool. Always let the lifeguard know before entering the pool.

Games & Physical Activities

It is absolutely fine to participate in activities in PE, as long as it is not more than the height of your child.

Shower/bath

A shower is more preferable to a bath (the ideal would be one without a glass door). If your child does have a bath then please supervise if the child is young. An older child should only have a bath when a responsible adult is present and fully aware that they are in the bath. Do not lock the door and a regular call to check they are ok at intervals is advisable.

Riding a bike

It is absolutely fine to ride a bike but please wear a helmet. Use designated cycle lanes wherever possible. If the child is young use a pavement if possible.

Safety pillow

Safety pillows have small holes which may help you breathe more easily if you are lying face down when having a seizure.

Audio (baby) monitor

This may help you to hear your child if they have a seizure overnight.

Road safety

Cross roads in safe places – zebra and pelican crossings.

(The information above has been taken from Epilepsy Action Website (2016)).

What to do when someone has a seizure

First aid for seizures is really very easy. In most instances all that is required is the removal of any dangerous objects, like furniture with sharp edges. Place a cushion (or jumper) under their head. Do not restrain the person, let the seizure happen. Reassure them during and after the seizure.

Enclosed is some first aid information for when somebody has a seizure. There is information about what to do if you see someone have a tonic-clonic or focal seizure.

Tonic-clonic seizures

Tonic-clonic seizures are the type of seizure most people recognise. They used to be called grand mal seizures. Someone having a tonic-clonic seizure goes stiff, loses consciousness, falls to the floor and begins to jerk or convulse.

They may go blue around the mouth due to irregular breathing. Sometimes they may lose control of their bladder or bowels and bite their tongue or the inside of their mouth.

Here's how to help if you see someone having a tonic-clonic seizure.

Do:

- Protect them from injury (remove harmful objects from nearby)
- Cushion their head
- Look for an epilepsy identity card or identity jewellery – it may give you information about their seizures and what to do
- Time how long the seizure lasts
- Aid breathing by gently placing them in the recovery position once the jerking has stopped
- Stay with them until they are fully recovered
- Be calm and reassuring

Don't:

- Don't restrain their movements
- Don't put anything in their mouth
- Don't try to move them unless they are in danger
- Don't give them anything to eat or drink until they are fully recovered
- Don't attempt to bring them round

Call for an ambulance if any of these things apply:

- You know it is their first seizure
- The seizure lasts for more than 5 minutes
- They have one tonic-clonic seizure after another without regaining consciousness between seizures
- They are seriously injured during the seizure
- They have trouble breathing after the seizure has stopped

Here's a reminder of the steps to put someone in the recovery position

- Put the arm nearest to you at a right angle to the body
- Bring the other arm across the person's chest and tuck their hand under their cheek
- Bring the knee furthest away from you into a right angle, so the foot is flat on the floor
- Pull on the knee, rolling the person towards you onto their side, whilst protecting their head with the other hand
- Adjust the top leg so that it's at a right angle and the person can't roll onto their back
- Tilt their head back slightly to keep their airway open
- Stay with them until they are fully recovered

Focal seizures

You may also hear this type of seizure called a partial seizure. Someone having a [focal seizure](#) may not be aware of their surroundings or what they are doing.

They may have unusual movements and behaviour such as plucking at their clothes, smacking their lips, swallowing repeatedly or wandering around.

Here's how to help if you see someone having a focal seizure.

Do:

- Guide them away from danger (such as roads or open water)
- Stay with them until recovery is complete
- Be calmly reassuring
- Explain anything that they may have missed

Don't:

- Don't restrain them
- Don't act in a way that could frighten them, such as making abrupt movements or shouting at them
- Don't assume they are aware of what is happening, or what has happened
- Don't give them anything to eat or drink until they are fully recovered
- Don't attempt to bring them round

Focal seizures do not normally need medical attention. You should call an ambulance if any of these things apply:

- You know it's the person's first seizure
- The seizure lasts for more than 5 minutes
- They have one seizure after another without regaining awareness between seizures
- They are injured during the seizure

Epilepsy charities:

www.epilepsy.org.uk

www.epilepsysociety.org.uk

www.youngpilepsy.org.uk

United Lincolnshire Hospitals NHS Trust has worked with AccessAble to create detailed Access Guides to facilities, wards and departments at our sites.

www.accessable.co.uk/united-lincolnshire-hospitals-nhs-trust

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