



FIRST AID FOR SEIZURES



FOR CONVULSIVE SEIZURES

Person falls, body becomes rigid, muscles jerk, breathing becomes shallow. Usually lasts 1-3 minutes. Afterwards, person is confused.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?

- **Stay calm.** Let the seizure take its course. Keep track of time.
- **Protect from injury.** If necessary, ease the person to the floor. Move hard or sharp objects out of the way. Place something soft under the head.
- **Loosen anything tight around the neck.** Check for medical I.D.
- **Do not restrain the person.**
- **Do not put anything in the mouth.**
- **Gently roll the person onto their side as the seizure subsides.** This allows saliva or other fluids to drain away, helping to keep the airway clear.
- **Talk gently to comfort and reassure the person afterwards.** They will be disoriented and confused – stay with them until they become reoriented. The person may need varying amounts of rest or sleep.

FOR NON-CONVULSIVE SEIZURES

Person is staring blankly, dazed, unresponsive, and any movements are purposeless and clumsy. Usually lasts a few minutes. Afterwards, person remains confused.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?

- **Stay with the person.** Do not try to stop the seizure – let it take its course. The person will be unaware of his or her actions, and may or may not hear you.
- **Move dangerous objects out of the way.**
- **Do not restrain the person.**
- **Gently guide away from danger or block access to hazards.**
- **Talk gently to comfort and reassure the person afterwards.** They will be confused and disoriented – stay with them until complete awareness returns.



WHEN TO CALL AN AMBULANCE...

- If a convulsive seizure lasts longer than 5 minutes
- If consciousness or regular breathing do not return after the seizure has ended
- If seizure recurs without full recovery between seizures
- If confusion after a seizure persists for more than an hour
- If seizure occurs in water (with or without PFD/float jacket)
- If there is no previous history of seizures or the person is injured, pregnant or suffers from diabetes

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT SEIZURE FIRST AID

Seizures are generally not medical emergencies. Most end naturally after a few minutes without ill effects and do not require emergency care.

Although a convulsive seizure might look like an emergency, the average person is able to continue about his or her business after a brief rest period. There may be a need for limited assistance in contacting friends or family and getting home, or there may not.

In circumstances where a seizure doesn't stop after five minutes or repeats itself before the person has fully recovered, an ambulance should be called. Continuous seizures (called *status epilepticus*) can be dangerous or even life-threatening.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

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