

How to recognize a seizure

A seizure will usually involve you becoming stiff, losing consciousness and falling to the ground. This is followed by jerking movements. Breathing becomes irregular and therefore your lips may well look blue. Biting of the tongue or lips may occur as well as loss of bladder and/or bowel control. After a minute or two the jerking movements should stop and consciousness should slowly return.

What causes a seizure, and will I have another?

A seizure is due to a burst of abnormal electrical activity in the brain. Older words for seizures include convulsions and fits. One in twenty people have a seizure at some time in the life but most of these will not go on to have epilepsy (1 in every 131 people in the UK currently have epilepsy). Epilepsy is defined as having a tendency to have seizures and will usually only be diagnosed in someone who has had two or more seizures.

In the event of another seizure...

If you have another seizure, anyone with you at the time should follow the advice below.

During the seizure:

- Protect the person from injury and try to cushion their head
- Do not try to restrain or move the person unless they are in immediate danger (e.g. lying in a road)
- Do not try to put anything into their mouth



After the seizure:

- Place the person in the recovery position to aid their breathing (see illustration)
- Stay with the person until recovery is complete
- Do not try to give them anything to eat or drink until they are fully recovered and do not try to bring them round



Call for an ambulance if...

- The seizure continues for more than five minutes
- One seizure follows another without the person regaining consciousness in between
- The person fails to make a full recovery after the seizure or suffers a significant injury during it

Further advice

You must not drive until you have been seen in the clinic. If the specialist agrees that you have had a fit, then you must not drive for at least 6 months and in some case 12 months. You must inform the DVLA – you can discuss this further in clinic.

Other situations that may be best avoided at least until after you are seen in clinic include the following:

- cycling in busy traffic
- swimming alone
- bathing a baby alone
- dangerous sports

You should also inform your employer that you have had a seizure.

Notes:

Are you a victim of Domestic Violence? For confidential advice, contact:

Bradford	0808 2800 999	https://www.stayingput.uk.net/contact
North Yorkshire	03000 110 110	https://www.idas.org.uk/
Lancashire	0300 323 0085	https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/your-health-and-wellbeing/domestic-abuse/

If you require this leaflet in other languages or formats please telephone the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on 01535 294019

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