



EPILEPSY YORK REGION

FIRST AID

Seizures are generally not medical emergencies. Most end naturally after a few minutes without poor after effects. A convulsive seizure may seem like a medical emergency and can be frightening, however most individuals are able to continue on with his or her daily activities after having a seizure. Some may require assistance afterwards and others may not.

When you see someone having a seizure, do not be frightened. Remain calm and remember these key points:

- If a person starts to bleed from the mouth, s/he has probably bitten the tongue and is most likely not bleeding for any other reason. This can be taken care of after the seizure ends. DO NOT put anything in their mouth.
- During a seizure, a person often stops breathing for only a few seconds.
- Most seizures last only 1-2 minutes, although the person may be confused for some time afterward. Stay with them until they become re-oriented and maybe a short period of rest is needed.
- The brain almost always stops the seizures safely and naturally.
- Once a seizure has started, you cannot stop it — just let it run its course. Only in emergencies, doctors use drugs to bring a non-stop seizure to an end.
- People don't feel pain during a seizure, although muscles might be sore afterward.
- Help to protect the person from injury. If necessary, ease the person to the floor, remove any sharp or harmful objects out of the way and place something soft under their head.
- Seizures are usually not life threatening, but the risk is increased in seniors by extra strain on the heart, the possibility of injury, or reduced intake of oxygen.
- Seizures are not dangerous to others.

In the event that a seizure does last for more than five minutes or starts again after a few minutes with no time for recovery, call an ambulance or have someone drive the person having a seizure to the hospital. There is a chance that individuals with seizure disorders could experience status epilepticus and immediate medical care is required from a doctor.

Visit <http://www.epilepsyontario.org/client/eo/eoweb.nsf/web/First+Aid?OpenDocument> for more information regarding appropriate protocols in the occurrence of seizures, such as what to do or say when calling for medical assistance and vital information for when the ambulance arrives. Further explanations on First Aid for both convulsive and non-convulsive seizures, persons in wheelchairs and water precautions are also discussed.

Information provided is not intended to replace any medical advice provided by your physician or neurologist. It is intended to supply general information on epilepsy and seizures. For further medical information or specific diagnostic questions, please refer your concerns to your physician or neurologist.



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