



Information for You from Your Health Care Team

SEIZURES

What is a seizure?

A seizure is also called a convulsion. It is a sudden attack of brain activity that causes you to lose control of your body. You may have shaking of your face, arms, or legs or look like you are staring off into space. Seizures may last seconds or minutes and can happen to people of any age. Your doctor may give you medicines to help prevent you from having a seizure.

What causes seizures?

The most common cause of seizures is epilepsy. It is a brain disease that may cause you to have more than one seizure. Other causes may include head injury, alcohol or other drugs, a high fever, a brain tumor, or an infection. Sometimes it is not known what causes seizures

What are signs of seizures?

- An aura, which may be something you see or feel, can be a warning sign.
- You may pass out.
- You are staring off into space, and will not answer when you are spoken to.
- Your face or part of your body shakes.
- You may urinate or have a bowel movement without knowing it, or you may throw up.
- After the seizure, you may feel irritable, not sure where you are or be difficult to wake up.

What to do if you have a seizure?

- If you have any warning that you may have a seizure, lie down in a safe place where you can't hurt yourself.
- Teach your family and close friends what to do if you have a seizure.
- **Call your doctor when the seizure is over.**

What to do if the person with you has a seizure?

- Stay calm.
- Keep the person from falling onto harmful objects. **Do not move the person unless the person is in danger.** Move hard or sharp objects out of the person's way.
- Do not force anything into the person's mouth or try to open clenched jaws. Turn the person on his or her side when the shaking movement stops or if he or she is vomiting.
- When the seizure is over, the person may not know what happened or where they are. They also may be very hard to wake up. Reassure the person that he or she is all right. Help him or her to rest and relax
- **Call the doctor**

What can you do to protect yourself?

- Your caregiver may have prescribed medicine to prevent seizures. Take medicines as directed. Do not stop taking the medicine without talking to your caregiver first.
- Avoid activities in which a seizure would cause danger to you or to others. Do not operate dangerous machinery, swim alone, or climb in high or dangerous places such as ladders or roofs. Do not drive until your caregiver says you may.
- Wear an emergency medical identification bracelet with information about your seizures. If you have a seizure, people around you will know what is wrong and get appropriate help

Speak Up Any if You Have Any Questions or Concerns.