

SEIZURE FIRST AID TIPS

There is not much you can do to stop a seizure once it starts. However, you can help protect someone from harm during one. You may look for a medical ID or an epilepsy rescue medication they may carry with them.

Some seizures are more dangerous than others are, but most are not an emergency. If you want to do something for the person, focus on keeping them safe.

What You Can Do

It is all about taking precautions. For someone having a generalized tonic-clonic seizure:

- Give them room. Keep other people back.
- Clear hard or sharp objects, like glasses and furniture, away.
- Cushion their head.
- Loosen clothing around their neck, if you can safely.
- Do not try to hold them down or stop their movements.
- **Do not** put anything in their mouth.
- If their head is not moving, turn it to one side.
- Look at your watch at the start of the seizure, so you can time its length.
- After the jerking stops, gently place them on their side, to help keep their airway clear.

For milder seizures, like a bit of staring or shaking arms or legs, guide the person away from hazards, including traffic, stairs, and water.

Do not leave someone who has had a seizure alone. Stay until they are fully aware of where they are and can respond normally when you talk to them. Speak calmly. Reassure them and explain what they missed if they are confused or frightened. Do not give them anything to drink or eat until they have completely recovered. Do not let them drive.

When to Call 911

Get medical help when:

- It is the person's very first seizure.
- The seizure lasts longer than 5 minutes.
- Another seizure begins soon after the first.
- The person doesn't "wake up" after the movements have stopped.
- The person is injured during the seizure.
- The person is pregnant.

If you're concerned that something else may be wrong, or the person has another medical condition such as heart disease or diabetes, call a doctor.