

Seizure Education

What is a seizure?

A seizure is a sudden, temporary surge of electricity in the brain. This surge of electricity can disrupt the normal functions of the brain and can make someone have extra movements or act differently.

What are the different types of seizures and what do they look like?

There are many different types of seizures. The most common types of seizures involve stiffening of the body, shaking and disruption in someone's ability to talk or respond normally.

Seizures are grouped based on where they start in the brain. Two major groups of seizures are:

1. Generalized Seizures- involving the whole brain or body at once
2. Focal Seizures- starting in one part of the brain or body.

Seizures can cause different repeated actions like blank stares, chewing movements, clumsiness, wandering, or confusion depending on where the seizure occurs in the brain.

What happens after a seizure?

The time after a seizure is called the "post-ictal" period. During this time the brain recovers after the seizure. Your child can be very tired and confused after the seizure. This period may last for a few minutes or up to several hours after a seizure.

Is a seizure harmful to the brain?

Seizures are not harmful to the brain unless they occur very frequently or last a very long time. If your child has had a seizure lasting 5 minutes or longer you will likely be prescribed a rescue medication by your neurology team to help prevent a long seizure in the future.

What should I do if they have another seizure?

- Remain calm and stay with your child.
- Make sure your child is in a safe place, such as a bed or the floor.
- Turn your child to the side to prevent choking.
- Remove your child's glasses and any restrictive clothing.
- Try to time how long the seizure lasts.
- Do not put anything in your child's mouth.

Seek immediate medical care or call 911 if:

- Your child has a second seizure.
- Your child turns blue or has trouble breathing.
- Your child is irritable or extremely tired or has changes in their behavior.
- You are worried that your child is not acting normal.

Are there any activity restrictions or safety considerations after someone has had a seizure?

- Do not sleep on top bunks of bunkbeds
- Do not climb heights greater than 5 feet without being harnessed.
- Your child cannot bathe or swim alone.
- Do not lock doors.
- Your child should always wear a helmet when riding a bike, skateboard, scooter, etc.
- Check local Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) resources about driving laws and restrictions in your home state