

Some Tips for Family Members

What to watch for during your loved one's seizure

Some individuals get a feeling or “aura” before a seizure begins. Muscle twitching, irritability, headache, vision changes or upset stomach may be part of the individual's aura, but this is different for each person.

The person's doctor may want to know what the seizure was like so watch the signs of the seizure during the seizure. After the seizure, write down what you saw. Look for such things as:

- ★ Where did the seizure start? (hands, arms, legs, eyes)
- ★ Did the seizures stay in one area of the body or did it move to other areas too?
- ★ What type of movements did you see? (jerking, twitching, stiffness)
- ★ How many minutes did the seizure last? (Time the seizures with a watch, if possible.)
- ★ Precipitating/trigger factors

How to help after the seizure

The person may have soiled their pants or vomited during or after the seizure. After the person is cleaned and/or changed clothes, allow the person to rest. They may be very tired and may sleep for a few hours. The person may complain of a headache or soreness. If the person feels cold, keep them warm with a blanket or coat. It is a good idea to check the person's temperature as some seizures can be caused by high temperature. The person's doctor will need to know if he/she has a fever.

Call the person's doctor and/or emergency help if:

- ★ The person has trouble breathing or skin color becomes bluish. Call 911 for emergency help if needed.
- ★ The seizure lasts more than 5 minutes.
- ★ The person cannot be awakened 30 minutes after the seizure.
- ★ There has been a change in frequency or type of seizure activity.

Other helpful tips

- ★ Make sure you refill prescriptions before the medicine runs out.
- ★ Be sure medicines are taken on time.
- ★ Do not give extra medicine or change the amount of medicine given without asking your doctor.
- ★ Wear a medication identification bracelet or necklace. Ask your local Epilepsy Foundation.
- ★ Tell the person's workplace, school or agency that the person has seizures and share first aid tips.
- ★ The person should never swim alone, drive alone or ride a bike without a helmet.