

An epileptic seizure is due to abnormal electrical activity in the brain. It consists of the involuntary contractions of the muscles in the body. Seizures may be caused by a number of reasons. Those may include, head injuries, lack of oxygen reaching the brain, difficult births, damage and subsequent scarring to the brain tissues, CVA (stroke) or a chemical imbalance. Bright flashing lights or certain smells can trigger a seizure.

Absence Seizure:

An Absence Seizure is caused by a minor disturbance in the brain's electrical activity. The signs and symptoms of a casualty suffering from Absence Seizures may be so minimal that the condition may go untreated for years.

Tonic Clonic:

A Tonic Clonic is a recurring major disturbance of the brain's activity causing violent and severe movements and thrashing. The casualty also becomes unconscious whilst having the seizure. Some sufferers of epileptic seizures may have a warning period, suddenly smelling a strange smell, tasting a funny taste, or suffering a funny feeling. These warning signs often give the sufferer time to find a safe area to lie down to have the seizure.

Signs and symptoms of an Absence Seizure may include:

- Staring blankly ahead.
- Suddenly stop talking through a sentence.
- Funny noises
- Slight jerking or twitching of the lips, eyes, limbs or head.
- Odd movements eg: lip smacking, clicking the tongue, chewing the lip.

Signs and Symptoms of a Tonic Clonic may include:

- Casualty falls to the ground unconscious, letting out a loud cry.
- Full body jerking movements.
- Blue congested face.
- Noisy breathing or wheezing.
- Body becomes stiff and the back arches.
- Congested or standing out blood vessels in the neck.
- Frothing from the mouth possibly blood stained due to the biting of their tongue.
- Possible loss of bladder and bowel control.

Treatment:

Follow the Basic First Aid Plan to assess the casualty.

- ✓ Protect the casualty from injury.
- ✗ Do not restrain the casualty.
- ✓ Make the area around the casualty safe.
- ✓ Place something soft under the casualty's head.



NOTE: Seek medical advice if this is the casualty's first seizure or you suspect the casualty may have injured their head.

If an Ambulance is required - call immediately - do not delay

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When the seizure stops

- ✓ If unconscious place the casualty onto their side.
- ✓ Loosen clothing.
- ✓ Talk calmly and quietly to the casualty. They may be confused and unaware of what has happened.
- ✓ If the casualty is sleepy, let them sleep.
- ✗ DO NOT Restrain the casualty, place anything into the casualty's mouth, leave the casualty alone, disturb the casualty when sleeping, let the casualty have food or drink immediately after the seizure.

SEEK MEDICAL ATTENTION IF:

- ✓ The seizure lasts more than 5 minutes.
- ✓ Another seizure occurs immediately after the last one or before the casualty has fully recovered from the first one.
- ✓ The casualty does not wake up properly.
- ✓ It is the casualty's first seizure.

Convulsions or seizures in babies and small children

Children commonly suffer convulsions due to high temperatures or illness.

Signs and Symptoms may include:

- Fever, flushed face.
- The body will arch and go rigid.
- Eyes will roll back in their head.
- Jerky body movements.
- Difficulty in breathing.
- Skin, face and lips or extremities will become blue.
- The infant or child will become limp after each episode.

Treatment:

Follow the Basic First Aid Plan to assess the casualty.

- ✓ Don't panic.
- ✓ Call for an Ambulance .
- ✓ Stay with the child and reduce their temperature.
- ✓ Ensure a clear and open airway. If necessary tilt the child's head down.
- ✓ Remove the child's clothes.
- ✓ Sponge with tepid warm water to reduce their temperature.
- ✓ Fan the child with a paper or a magazine. Discontinue if the child starts to shiver.
- ✓ If medical advice is given, reduce the child's temperature by administering medication.

If an Ambulance is required - call immediately - do not delay

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