



Eastern Paediatric Epilepsy

Network

Advice Sheet for First Seizure (Child/Young Person)

What is a seizure?

Watching your child have a seizure is a very frightening experience. You may even think that your child is dying. However, seizures are not as serious as they look.

A seizure is a disturbance of electrical activity in the brain that causes messages to become mixed up. There are different sorts of seizures (sometimes called “fits” or “convulsions”). Often children become unconscious and are not able to respond to you. They may fall and there can be jerking of the limbs.

Is it Epilepsy?

A single seizure does not mean your child has epilepsy – this may be the only seizure that your child ever has. If your child has more seizures, they may require further investigation and/or treatment.

What should you do if your child has another seizure where they are unconscious and jerking?

Do:

- Assess the situation
- Note the time – how long did it last?
- Move objects that may cause injury
- Put something soft under the head
- Turn on side as soon as possible
- Stay with the person

Do Not:

- Panic
- Move the child unless in danger
- Restrict movements
- Place anything in the mouth
- Give anything by mouth until fully recovered

Call an ambulance (999) if:

- You are frightened or need help
- The seizure continues for more than 5 minutes
- If one seizure follows another
- If the child is injured or you are concerned about their breathing
- You believe they need medical attention

If you have **not** called for an ambulance because the seizure is short lived, you will need to inform your G.P or a health professional.

What should you tell other people?

It is a good idea to let other people know that your child has had a “first seizure”. e.g. Family, friends, your child’s school/playgroup, nursery or childminder.

Why don’t you share First Aid information with them?

Will my child be safe?

It is important to let your child take part in all their normal activities. However, you need to take extra care when thinking about bathing, swimming, cycling and cooking.

www.epilepsy.org.uk

For more information you could contact:

Your G.P, school nurse, health visitor or other health professional.

Useful telephone numbers and web sites:

NHS Direct: 0845 608 4455 www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk

Epilepsy Action: www.epilepsy.org.uk

NSE: www.epilepsynse.org.uk