

Fact Sheet 4

What to do if someone is having a convulsive seizure

Stay calm!

1. Make the person safe
2. Cushion the head
3. Time the seizure
4. Look for ID on the person
5. Don't hold down
6. Put nothing in the mouth
7. When the seizure ends, place the person in the recovery position (see below)
8. Stay with the person until he/she has fully recovered.

There is no need to call an ambulance (111) *unless*:

- The seizure lasts longer than 5 minutes
- The seizure is closely followed by another
- The person is pregnant or has diabetes
- The person has suffered an injury
- The person has swallowed water

Status epilepticus or non-stop seizures, is serious and requires immediate medical attention. Phone 111 and ask for assistance.

What to do if a seizure occurs whilst a person is in a wheelchair

- Don't remove them from the wheelchair
- Make sure that the wheelchair is secure
- Support the person's head
- If the airway is blocked, take the person out of the wheelchair **after** the seizure and place him/her in the recovery position

What to do if a seizure occurs whilst the person is in water

- Stay calm
- Swim to the person
- Keep the person's face above water by supporting their head and shoulders
- Do not restrain the person's movements
- Do not force anything into the mouth
- Guide the person away from the edge of the pool to avoid injury
- Once the seizure has stopped, move the person out of the water
- Place the person in the recovery position
- Check the person's airway and pulse
- Commence resuscitation if needed
- Stay with the person until consciousness returns and offer reassurance.
- Dial 111. The person may have inhaled water into his/her lungs

How to put a person in the recovery position



Sit close to the person. Place his/her nearest arm to you at right angles.



Place the furthest arm to you across the person's chest and next to his/her cheek. Hold the arm in place.

Using your other hand, grab the far leg and lift it, making sure that the foot remains on the ground.



Gently roll the person onto his/her side.



Adjust the position of the arms and legs to ensure that the person is in a stable position for recovery.

Make sure that you tilt the head slightly.

Stay with the person until full consciousness returns.

Images accessed 21/4/13 from www.oxfordmedicine.com

Disclaimer: this fact sheet is for education purposes only. Please consult your doctor or other health professional for advice regarding your epilepsy.