

Act now: First Aid For Tonic Clonic Seizures

In the tonic (stiff) phase, people suddenly become unconscious, the body stiffens, and they will fall if standing. A person may cry out as air is forced out through the lungs and over the vocal cords, and there may be froth or excess saliva (which could be pink if the tongue is bitten). The clonic (jerking) phase begins and the body and limbs jerk rhythmically. A person may develop shallow or noisy breathing, and possibly experience a loss of bladder or bowel control. This seizure generally lasts less than five minutes and a person's awareness gradually returns.

Act:

Stay calm

Create a safe space — remove obstacles

Time the seizure

Cushion the head

Do not restrain the person

Do not put anything in the person's mouth

Put the person in recovery position after the seizure has stopped

Look for personal ID

Comfort:

Provide support and reassurance until the person has fully recovered

A person may ask for help to get home safely — you may need to phone a family member or friend

Time to call 111?

- If you are unsure how to help
- If you know that this is a person's first seizure
- If the seizure lasts longer than 5 minutes
- If one seizure closely follows another
- If the person has difficulty breathing
- If the person is injured or has swallowed water
- If the person is pregnant
- If the person has another health issue

