

# Coping with Seizures in Children



Only about 1 in 10 people will ever have a seizure in their life. Children who have seizures may have only one and never have another. Other children may have seizures once in a while, or many times a day. And though seizures can be scary for parents and caregivers, they aren't painful and are usually brief.

## What to do if your child has a seizure

A convulsive seizure is also known as a major motor seizure or a grand mal seizure. If your child shows signs of having this type of seizure:

- Stay calm.
- Make sure the child is breathing.
- Roll the child onto their side.
- Place the child on the ground in a safe area.
- Remove any nearby objects that the child might hit.
- Loosen any clothing around the child's head and neck.
- Remain with your child until the seizure is over.

Watch and be able to describe what happened before, during, and after the seizure. Try to look at a watch or clock to know how long the seizure lasts.

If your child has medicine to stop a seizure while it happens, make sure you know how to use it.

If your child has a vagus nerve stimulator to treat seizures, follow the instructions you were given to activate it.

## What not to do during and after a seizure

- Don't try to restrain the child's movements.
- Don't put anything in the child's mouth.
- Don't wake the child if they fall asleep after the seizure.
- Don't give the child anything to eat or drink until they are awake and alert.

## Keeping your child safe

- Develop a list of safety measures with your healthcare provider to prevent injury to your child when they have a seizure.
- Carefully monitor activities such as swimming and bathing to keep your child safe in the case of a seizure.
- Tell other caretakers of your child's condition. Instruct them on how to respond to a seizure if it happens.
- If your child is on medicine, make sure they take it as prescribed.
- Keep track of the number of remaining pills and refills. Call your healthcare provider for refills if they are running low.

- Talk with your healthcare provider about when and if it will be safe for your child to learn to drive and obtain a driver's license.

## Call 911

Call 911 if your child:

- Has trouble breathing
- Has bluish skin
- Has a heart condition
- Hurts themselves during the seizure
- Has a seizure that lasts more than 5 minutes
- Has a seizure that seems different than usual
- Remains unconscious, unresponsive, or confused for more than 5 minutes after the seizure

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