

Epilepsy & Seizure Awareness

Epilepsy is a condition of the brain that causes seizures.

A seizure is a disruption of the electrical communication between neurons.



Three main types of seizures

Absence

(previously known as petit mal)

What is it?

Absence seizures cause a short period of "blinking out" or "staring into space". These seizures are harder to spot.

What do they look like?

- Mistaken as daydreaming
- Appears to be is staring off or has a blank look
- Stopping of activity
- Fluttering eyelids or eyes turning upward
- Last less than 10 seconds

Atonic

(also known as "drop seizures")

What is it?

Means "without tone", in this type of seizure the muscles suddenly become limp

What do they look like?

- Part of the body becomes limp
- Eye lids may droop
- Head may nod forward
- Person may drop things
- Last less than 15 seconds
- If standing the person may fall to the ground

Note: It is important to protect the head in this type of seizure

Tonic clonic

(previously known as grand mal)

What is it?

This is the type of seizure people typically think of when they think of seizures. It is important to insure a persons safety when they are experiencing a tonic clonic seizure.

What do they look like?

Tonic phase:

- Stiffening muscles
- Groaning
- Loss of consciousness

Clonic phase:

- Rapid jerking of elbows, hips and knees

Tonic clonic seizure typically last 1-3 minutes

Assistance during Tonic clonic seizures



What to do

- ✓ DO ease the person to the floor 
- ✓ DO move any objects that from around them that could cause injury
- ✓ DO put something under the head to cushion 
- ✓ DO loosen anything around there neck that might make it difficult to breathe 
- ✓ DO time the seizure



What NOT to do

- ✗ DO NOT hold the person down or try to stop their movement
- ✗ DO NOT put anything in their mouth
- ✗ DO NOT try to give mouth-to-mouth or any type of CPR
- ✗ DO NOT offer the person food or water until they are fully alert



If the seizure lasts more than 5 minutes, call emergency services



During any type of seizure it is important to comfort the person, keep them calm and make sure they get home safely