

Instructor Fact Sheet - Epilepsy & Seizures: Types & Care

Types:

Partial Seizures – Simple & Complex

- Simple: usually conscious and doesn't affect awareness or memory
- Complex: usually conscious, but affects awareness & memory

Generalized Seizures (unconsciousness) – Absence, Tonic, Tonic-Clonic, & Status Epilepticus

- Absence: (petit mal) appears to be staring into space (seconds to 5 minutes)
- Tonic: muscular tension (1-5 minutes)
- Tonic-Clonic: (grand mal) muscular tension & relaxation, twitching (1-5 minutes)
- Status Epilepticus: (serious, requires immediate care) series of grand mal seizures, consciousness is not completely regained.

Care:

Tell the people close to you — friends, relatives, teachers, coaches — about your epilepsy and teach them what to do in case you have a seizure when they're with you. Some things that can be done to help someone who's having a seizure are:

- Stay calm. See if person is wearing a medical alert bracelet.
- Help, but don't force, the person to lie down on his or her side (turn head/body sideways to protect airway), preferably on a soft surface, and place something soft under the person's head.
- Take the person's glasses or backpack off and loosen any tight clothing near the neck.
- Do **not** place an object into the person's mouth during a seizure.
- Do **not** restrain or hold the person.
- Move objects, especially sharp or hard ones, away from the person.
- Stay with the person or make sure another friend or trusted person stays with him or her.
- Talk with the person in a calm, reassuring way after the seizure is over.
- Observe the event and be able to describe what happened before, during, and after the seizure (length of seizure).

There's usually no need to call 911 if the person having a seizure is known to have epilepsy. However, if the person is injured, has another medical condition like diabetes, or has a long seizure or multiple seizures, he or she may need immediate medical attention.

For further information visit <http://www.epilepsyfoundation.org/>