

First Aid for Seizures

**There are many types of seizures.
Most seizures end in a few minutes.**

These are general steps to help someone who is having ANY type:

- **DO** stay with the person until the seizure ends and he or she is fully awake. After it ends, help the person sit in a safe place. Once they are alert and able to communicate, tell them what happened in very simple terms.
- **DO** comfort the person and speak calmly.
- **DO** check to see if the person is wearing a medical bracelet or other emergency information.
- **DO** keep yourself and other people calm.
- **DO** offer to call a taxi or another person to make sure the person gets home safely.

Knowing what **NOT** to do is important for keeping a person safe during or after a seizure.

- **DO NOT** hold the person down or try to stop his or her movements.
- **DO NOT** put anything in the person's mouth. This can injure teeth or the jaw. A person having a seizure cannot swallow his or her tongue.
- **DO NOT** try to give mouth-to-mouth breaths (like CPR). People usually start breathing again on their own after a seizure.
- **DO NOT** offer the person water or food until he or she is fully alert.

For information on our programs and services, please call us at toll free 1-877-804-2241 or check us out on the web at epilepsy-ohio.org.



What Causes Epilepsy?

For 2 in 3 people, the cause of epilepsy is unknown. This type of epilepsy is called cryptogenic or idiopathic.

Some known causes include:

- Traumatic brain injury or head injury
- Brain infection
- Brain tumor
- Stroke
- Some genetic disorders
- Loss of oxygen to the brain
- Other Developmental Disorders

OUR MISSION

Epilepsy Alliance Ohio is dedicated to supporting those impacted by epilepsy in local communities by confronting the spectrum of challenges created by seizures.

OUR LOCATIONS

Cincinnati Office
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EPILEPSY



What is Epilepsy?

Epilepsy is a disorder of the brain that causes seizures. A seizure is a sudden, uncontrolled electrical disturbance in the brain.

A seizure can cause changes in your behavior, movements or feelings and in levels of consciousness. A person is diagnosed as having epilepsy when they have experienced two or more seizures.

Who has Epilepsy?

According to the Centers for Disease Control, 1 in 26 people will be diagnosed as having epilepsy at some point in their life.

With regard to seizures, 1 in 10 people will have a seizure at some point in their life. In the United States, there are 3.4 million adults and children living with epilepsy. Epilepsy does not discriminate. A person can be diagnosed with epilepsy at any time in their life and epilepsy affects all races, genders, and religions.

Locally, with 1.2% of the population in the United States living with epilepsy, this equates to 80,000 people in Indiana; 53,000 people in Kentucky and 140,000 people in Ohio living with epilepsy.

There are more than twice as many people with epilepsy in the United States as the number of people with cerebral palsy, cystic fibrosis, muscular dystrophy and multiple sclerosis combined.



How is Epilepsy Treated?

There are many things a provider and person with epilepsy can do to stop or lessen seizures. **The most common treatments for epilepsy:**

Medications

Anti-seizure drugs are medicines that limit the spread of seizures in the brain. A health care provider will change the amount of the medicine or prescribe a new drug if needed to find the best treatment plan. Medicines work for about 2 in 3 people with epilepsy.

Devices

Vagus Nerve Stimulation (VNS)

An electrical device is placed, or implanted under the skin on the upper chest to send signals to the vagus nerve.

Responsive Neurostimulation (RNS)

A small device is put under the scalp with 1-2 wires that are placed under or on the surface of the brain where the seizures start.

Diet

Ketogenic Diet

A high fat, low carbohydrate diet with calorie limits.

Surgery

When seizures come from a single area of the brain (focal seizures), surgery to remove that area may stop future seizures or make them easier to control with medicine. Epilepsy surgery is mostly used when the seizure focus is located in the temporal lobe of the brain.

Seizure Types

The most common types include:

Generalized Onset

Tonic-Clonic (Grand Mal)

Involve all areas of the brain. Abrupt loss of consciousness, convulsions, rigid muscles and jerking; typically last 1 to 3 minutes followed by period of confusion.

Generalized Onset

Absence (Petit Mal)

Blank stare which lasts a few seconds and is sometimes combined with eye blinking or lip smacking.

Focal Onset

Impaired Awareness (Complex Partial)

Staring and dazed expression, person is unaware and does not remember, may perform repetitive random movements and not be able to talk normally; typically lasts 1 to 2 minutes and may be followed by confusion.

Focal Onset

Aware (Simple Partial)

Jerking in one or more parts of the body, sensory or perceptual changes that may not be obvious to others. The person is aware during the seizure.

Atonic

(Drop Attack)

Sudden collapse with recovery within a minute.

Myoclonic

Sudden, brief, massive jerks involving all or part of the body.

