Seizures

You had a seizure. About 2% of the population will have a seizure problem during their life. Sometimes the cause for the seizure is not known. Seizures are most often associated with one of these problems:

- Epilepsy.
- Not taking your seizure medicine.
- Alcohol and drug abuse.
- Head injury, strokes, tumors, and brain surgery.
- High fever and infections.
- Low blood sugar.

Evaluating a new seizure disorder may require having a brain scan or an EEG (brain wave test). If you have been given a seizure medicine, it is very important that you take it as prescribed. **Not taking these medicines as directed is the most common cause of seizures. Blood tests are often used to be sure you are taking the proper dose.**

Seizures cause many different symptoms, from convulsions to brief blackouts. **Please do not ride a bike, drive a car, go swimming, climb in high or dangerous places such as ladders or roofs, or operate any dangerous equipment until you have your doctor's permission**. If you hold a driver's license, state law may require that a report be made to the motor vehicles department. You should wear an emergency medical identification bracelet with information about your seizures. If you have any warning that a seizure may occur, lie down in a safe place to protect yourself.

Teach your family and friends what to do if you have any further seizures. They should stay calm and try to keep you from falling on hard or sharp objects. It is best not to try to restrain a seizing person or to force anything into their mouth. Do not try to open clenched jaws. When the seizure is over, the person should be rolled on their side to help drain any vomit or secretions from the mouth. After a seizure the person may be confused or drowsy for several minutes and they can be reassured. **An ambulance should be called if the seizure lasted more than 5 minutes or if confusion remains for more than 30 minutes**. Call your caregiver or the emergency department for further instructions.

Do not drive until cleared by your caregiver or neurologist!

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