

## Basic Seizure First Aid

Seizures can be scary to the ASHA staff and participants. Seizures are very common in the Special Needs community, especially those participants with Autism and neuromuscular disorders like Cerebral Palsy. Seizures typically are mild and tend to last less than a minute. Also, speak to individual's family and ask about what the typical seizure is like and what they would want you to do if the participant has a seizure.

### Causes:

- **Internal**–Fever, Medications (missed seizure meds an/or non-effective medications), Stroke, Brain tumor, Traumatic brain injury/head injury, Hormonal, Central nervous system infection or toxicity.
- **External**–Temperature changes, blinking/flashing lights

### DO...

- **Keep them safe! Protect their head and body, Maintain airway!**
- Sit next to participant or ease the person to the floor if needed.
- If lying on the floor, turn the person gently onto one side. This will help the person breathe easier.
- Keep the area safe. Remove hard or sharp objects nearby including eyeglasses.
- Put something soft and flat, like a folded jacket, participant's head.
- Loosen headgear and uniform or anything around the neck that may make it harder to breathe.
- Time the length of the seizure. Call 911 if the seizure lasts longer than 5 minutes.
- Stay with the participant until the seizure ends and they are fully alert and explained what has happened.
- Comfort the person and speak calmly.
- Check to see if the person is wearing a medical bracelet or other emergency information.
- Keep yourself and other people calm.
- Notify family to make sure the person gets home safely.

### DO NOT...

- 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 they are fully alert.

**Call 911 if...**

- The seizure lasts longer than 5 minutes.
- The person stays unresponsive.
- The person has another seizure soon after the first one.
- The person is hurt during the seizure.
- The person has a health condition like diabetes, heart disease, or is pregnant.

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