

## **What is a seizure?**

- A seizure is a brief period during which your child might become unconscious and parts of her body may twitch.
- During a seizure, the body goes into convulsions.

## **What causes a febrile seizure?**

- A febrile seizure is triggered by a fever.
- The high fever could be due to infection.
- If your child has a seizure, call the doctor right away to determine the cause of the fever.
- Febrile seizures are not a sign of epilepsy. However, children with epilepsy are more likely to have febrile seizures.

## **What happens during the seizure?**

- A febrile seizure usually lasts less than 5 minutes but can last up to 15 minutes.
- Your child's arms and legs may twitch and jerk.
- Her eyes might roll back into her head.
- She may lose consciousness.
- She may lose bladder or bowel control.
- After the seizure, your child may cry or be very tired.

## **Who can get them?**

- They are most common in young children between 6 months and 5 years old.
- Children 12-18 months old are at greatest risk of having a febrile seizure.
- Children usually stop having febrile seizures by the time they are 5 or 6 years old.
- Parents who have had seizures may be more likely to have children who have seizures.

## **What should I do when my child has seizure?**

- Febrile seizures often scare parents, but they are usually harmless to the child.
- The two most important things to do are 1)Make sure that your child is breathing and 2)Keep your child from hurting herself.

Stay calm and follow a few simple steps:

- Make sure your child is breathing. If her lips turn bluish, this is a sign that she is not breathing.
- Call for emergency help if your child is not breathing. If you know CPR, give CPR while you wait.
- If your child is breathing okay, move her to the floor or ground so she doesn't fall.
- Lay your child on her side to prevent choking.
- Remove any objects near your child including tables and chairs.
- Loosen clothes that your child is wearing.
- Do not hold your child down or interfere with her movements.
- Never put anything in your child's mouth during a seizure.
- Call the doctor as soon as possible.
- Your child will probably fall into a deep sleep after her seizure. This is normal. Do not wake her up. Do not give her food or drink while she is asleep.
- Your doctor may tell you to try to reduce your child's fever.

## **How are they treated?**

- The doctor will examine your child to find the cause of the fever.
- The doctor will give you recommendations on how to treat your child's fever or illness and may give you suggestions for preventing future seizures.

### **Can febrile seizures be prevented?**

- If your child has had a febrile seizure before, you may be able to prevent future seizures.
- Try to control your child's fever as soon as she becomes ill. The seizures usually happen on the first day of illness.
- Give your child acetaminophen (such as Tylenol) or ibuprofen (such as Advil) to reduce fever.
- Do not give your child aspirin.

### **When should I call the doctor?**

- If your child has a seizure, call the doctor right away to determine the cause of the seizure and fever.
- Call the doctor if your child's seizure lasts over 5 minutes.
- Call the doctor if your child has more than one seizure.
- Call the doctor if you have questions or concerns about your child's condition.

### **Quick Answers**

- A seizure is a brief period during which your child might become unconscious and parts of her body may twitch.
- A febrile seizure is triggered by a high fever.
- A febrile seizure usually lasts less than 5 minutes but can last 15 minutes.
- They are most common in young children between 6 months and 5 years old.
- During the seizure make sure that your child is breathing and keep her from hurting herself.
- After the seizure, call the doctor. The doctor will examine your child to find the cause of the seizure and fever.
- To prevent future seizures, try to control your child's fever as soon as she becomes ill.
- Call the doctor if your child has a seizure.

### **References**

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