

HEALTH & SAFETY: EPILEPSY

Description of Issue and Importance

Epilepsy is a brain disorder involving repeated seizures. Epilepsy occurs in 10-30% of persons with an intellectual disability. A seizure is an electrical burst within the brain. Signs of seizures vary from a range of a sensation of pins and needles or an episode of confusion or inattention to a collapse with loss of consciousness.

Recommended Action and Prevention Strategy

- Seek medical advice if the person experiences a seizure for the first time.
- Watch the movements and length of time of any seizure and record your observation.
- Seizures are dangerous when they last long enough to cause a lack of oxygen to the brain. Seek immediate medical help (unless otherwise instructed) if:
 - the seizure lasts more than five minutes
 - breathing or consciousness does not return after the seizure stops
 - a second seizure follows immediately
 - the person is pregnant and has a seizure
 - the person has diabetes and has a seizure, unless otherwise directed by the physician. Remember to treat for low blood sugar urgently as directed.
 - the person was injured during the seizure.
- Even mild seizures may require treatment, because they can be dangerous especially during activities like driving, climbing on a ladder or bathing or swimming unsupervised.
- Train all care providers in Seizure First Aid.

Related Resources

Mayo Clinic www.MayoClinic.com

Epilepsy Foundation www.epilepsyfoundation.org

Outreach Services

outreach@fssa.in.gov • DDRSOutreach.IN.gov

For related reminders and resources, please visit DDRSOutreach.IN.gov.



Indiana Family & Social Services Administration
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