Seizures - safety issues

It can be scary to see a child having a seizure and it is helpful to know what to do, how to help and when to call an ambulance.  If you are present when someone is having a seizure you should follow the simple step by step instructions below.

**Major seizures:**

Major seizures are convulsive seizures with stiffening and/or jerking movements of the limbs. These seizures are often called 'convulsive seizures', 'tonic-clonic seizures', or a 'fit'.

* 1. Stay calm.
  2. Check for medical identification.
  3. Protect the child from injury by moving harmful objects away from them.
  4. Time the seizure using a watch.
  5. Loosen anything that is tight around their neck.
  6. Put something soft under their head.
  7. Stay with the child and give reassurance.
  8. Do not put anything in their mouth.
  9. Do not try to restrain them, i.e. do not try to stop them from jerking.
  10. When the seizure is over, roll the child onto their side, into the recovery position.
  11. Call an ambulance.
  12. Try to give them some privacy and keep other people away.

**Minor seizures:**

Children may have seizures where they 'go blank' and stare for a few seconds or minutes. Sometimes they stay fully conscious during a seizure and can describe what happened or how they felt. Sometimes they may simply seem confused or have unusual behaviour. These seizures may also be called 'absence seizures' or 'local seizures'.

* 1. Stay calm.
  2. Check for medical identification.
  3. Gently guide the child away from harm or remove harmful objects close to them.
  4. Time the seizure using a watch.
  5. Stay with the child and give reassurance.
  6. Try to give them some privacy and keep other people away.
  7. If a convulsive seizure develops, follow the major seizure management steps.

**If the seizure happens in a wheelchair, car seat or stroller:**

* 1. Leave the child seated if they are secure and safely strapped in.
  2. Gently hold their head.
  3. When the jerking stops, if they are unconscious, take them out of the seat, lay them down and roll them onto their side.

**When to call an ambulance**

* 1. you think it is the child's first seizure
  2. the seizure lasts more than five minutes
  3. another seizure quickly follows the first one
  4. the child remains unconscious or has trouble breathing after the seizure
  5. the seizure happens in water
  6. the child is hurt or injured
  7. the child has diabetes and consider giving treatment for hypoglycaemia
  8. the child does not seem to fully recover

THE EPILESY ACTION WEBSITE PROVIDES FURTHER INFORMATION <https://www.epilepsy.org.uk/info/firstaid>

OTHER SAFTEY ADVICE

* Keep an [eye](http://www.webmd.com/eye-health/picture-of-the-eyes) on your child while he or she is in the bath.
* Make sure the bathroom door is not locked and ideally keep the door open sufficiently to gain access if needed. .
* Keep the water in the bath low and ensure the drain is working.
* Shower instead.

Outside the home:

* Don't let a child with possible epilepsy swim alone.
* Do not allow your child to go deeper than shoulder height.
* If your child has a seizure while [swimming](http://www.webmd.com/parenting/fun-and-fit-family-11/slideshow-beach-safety), support him or her in the water until it is practical get him or her out of the water.
* Ensure your child cycles on quiet roads and wears a helmet, if uncertain avoid cycling until seen by the Paediatrician.
* If your child is going out they should be with someone who is aware of the possible diagnosis.