

## FIRST AID FACT SHEET

# Seizures and Epilepsy

A seizure is a sudden surge of electrical activity in the brain. Seizures may vary from muscle jerks through to severe and prolonged convulsions. Epilepsy is a neurological disorder which triggers recurrent and unprovoked seizures. Not all seizures are epilepsy, but all require first aid.

### Caused by

- + Head injury or high fever.
- + Brain tumour or stroke.
- + Poisoning or drug overdose.
- + Serious infection or lack of oxygen.

### Signs & symptoms

- + Sudden spasm of muscles producing stiffness or rhythmic jerking movements. If standing, the casualty will fall which may result in injury.
- + Suddenly cry out.
- + Shallow breathing or breathing may temporarily stop, leading to pale, blue tinged lips and face.
- + Excessive saliva (frothing) from the mouth.
- + Changes in conscious state from being fully alert to confused, drowsy or loss of consciousness.

## What to do

### During a seizure

1. Follow DRSABCD St John Action Plan.
2. **DO NOT**
  - + Restrain the casualty or restrict movement.
  - + Put anything in the casualty's mouth.
  - + Move the casualty, unless in danger.
3. Protect casualty from environment: move furniture, cushion head and shoulders.
4. Ensure the airway is maintained.
5. Follow the casualty's Seizure Management Plan if in place.
6. Record the duration of the seizure.

### After a seizure

1. Place casualty into Recovery Position, ensure that the airway is clear and open.
2. Manage any injuries. Rest and reassure.
3. Seek medical aid.
4. **DO NOT** disturb if casualty falls asleep, but continue to monitor breathing and response.

Call **Triple Zero (000)** for an ambulance if:

- + First ever seizure.
- + The seizure continues for more than five (5) minutes or another seizure quickly follows.
- + The casualty has been injured, is a diabetic or is pregnant.



In a medical emergency  
call **Triple Zero (000)**

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