

EPILEPTIC SEIZURE

FIRST AID⁺

An epileptic seizure disturbs the normal function of a person.

An epileptic seizure is caused by a transient disorder of the brain's electric activity. The symptoms of the seizure depend on the location of the deviating electrical discharge and the area affected in the brain. The most common types of seizures which require immediate treatment are seizures with convulsions and loss of consciousness and seizures with impaired awareness.

A seizure usually lasts a few minutes and passes by itself. If the seizure is prolonged or reoccurs soon so that the person does not fully recover in between, one should call the emergency number 112.

Some people with epilepsy carry a necklace or a bracelet indicating that they have epilepsy.



epilepsia



SEIZURES WITH CONVULSIONS AND LOSS OF CONSCIOUSNESS

The person loses consciousness, falls and his body stiffens. He may bite his tongue or the cheek resulting in bleeding from the mouth.

The stiffening is followed by jerking convulsions. Breathing may be interrupted for a few seconds and saliva or foam may flow from the mouth. After the seizure the person may be sleepy and desoriented for quite a long time but can anyway be waking up.

1

Remain calm. Anyone can help a person with an epileptic seizure. No special skills are required to provide first aid.

2

Do not attempt to prevent the convulsions, but make sure that the person does not knock his head (place a cushion under the head) or otherwise injure himself.

Seizures usually only last 1–2 minutes.

3

Do not put anything in the mouth, as it will make it difficult to breathe.

4

Place the person on his side as soon as the convulsions tail off. This way, the airways will remain open and saliva and foam can come out of the mouth.

5

Make sure that the person is able to breathe freely and you can feel the air flow.

6

Call the emergency number if the seizure lasts more than 5 minutes or the seizures reoccur before the person has recovered from the previous attack.

If you do not know that the person has epilepsy, call the emergency number 112 after the first aid.

7

Make sure that the person has not injured himself and has recovered properly, can answer questions and knows where he is going before leaving him. Call the emergency number if the person is breathing poorly, has not recovered or has injured himself during the seizure.



SEIZURES WITH IMPAIRED AWARENESS

During the seizure, the person may be confused and is not fully aware of his surroundings. He may repeat the same mechanical movement, for example, walk aimlessly, rub his hands, pick at his clothes or smack his lips. He seems not to understand what is happening and can not answer questions properly.

1

Remain close to the person who has had the seizure and, if necessary, try to guide him in such a way that he does not harm himself. A seizure will usually only last a few minutes.

2

Do not try to prevent the person from moving, as he is likely to resist you.

3

Allow the seizure to go over by itself. If it does not stop within 5 minutes, call the emergency number.

4

Make sure that the person has properly recovered, answers questions and knows where he is going before leaving him.

Call the emergency number if the person has injured himself during the seizure.

**If you are not sure what to do,
call the emergency number**

112

EMERGENCY MEDICATION FOR PROLONGED SEIZURES

A vast majority (> 90%) of epileptic seizures pass by themselves within 1 to 4 minutes. They do not require any specific action or special medical treatment at the scene. Epilepsy is treated with long term preventative medication which is enhanced if a person still has seizures regardless of the medication.

Epileptic seizures are considered to be prolonged when they last for more than 5 minutes or when seizures recur before the person recovers from a previous seizure. If a person is prone to suffer such seizures emergency medication can be prescribed. The emergency medication can be a liquid diazepam enema or a midazolam solution to be administered to the inner cheek. The medication is prescribed by a doctor and the correct use of the emergency medication is instructed by the doctor or the nurse. The emergency medication should be given only by somebody who knows how to give the medication properly, who knows the person with epilepsy and his typical seizures and knows the instructions when to give the emergency medication. This person can be f ex a family member, worker in the day care or school or in a nursing home,

T If the seizure continues regardless of emergency medication, the emergency number should be called and the person taken to a hospital.

If the epilepsy is in good control, no emergency medication is prescribed. If a seizure appears after a long seizure free period, it is best to contact the doctor for enhancement of the preventative longterm medication.

When the convulsions tail off, the unconscious person is placed on his side so that any secretions, mucus and possible vomit can come out of the mouth and do not block the airways.



MY EPILEPTIC SEIZURES

Name _____

Address _____

What happens when I have an epileptic seizure?

What kind of help do I need if I have a seizure?

Who should be informed if I have a seizure? _____

Tel. _____

My doctor: _____

Tel. _____

My antiepileptic medication:

Possible allergies for medications:



Approximately 60,000 Finns suffer from epilepsy, about 5,000 of which are children. In one third epilepsy is severe, the seizures continue despite the medication.

Epilepsy may occur at any age, most commonly in early childhood or in the elderly. Annually, about 3,500 people begin to take anti-epileptic drugs, 700 of which are under 15 years of age.

Epilepsy is a long-term illness, the treatment of which is often lifelong.



Malmin kauppatie 26, FI-00700 HELSINKI, FINLAND

 +358 9 350 8230

 epilepsialiitto@epilepsia.fi

www.epilepsia.fi



facebook.com/epilepsialiitto
facebook.com/groups/epilepsiankansa



instagram.com/epilepsialiitto
[@epilepsialiitto](https://instagram.com/epilepsialiitto)
[@epilepsiankansa](https://instagram.com/epilepsiankansa)
[@finepilepsywarriors \(nuoret\)](https://instagram.com/finepilepsywarriors)



twitter.com/epilepsialiitto
[@epilepsialiitto](https://twitter.com/epilepsialiitto)

EPILEPTIC SEIZURE

FIRST AID⁺

Anyone can help a person who has got an epileptic seizure

