



## Seizures Discharge Advice



### Cork Emergency Medicine

#### What is a seizure?

A seizure occurs when there is an abnormal discharge of electrical activity in the brain. This can cause you to lose consciousness and cause your limbs to jerk or shake. In some cases people suffer from a form of seizure where they appear to go ‘vacant’ for a period of time. Sometimes people bite their tongue or may pass urine. You can appear confused when you come around and may feel worn out. A seizure may be triggered by stress, exhaustion, head injury, overuse of alcohol, use of drugs or illness.

A seizure occurring for the first time does not mean a diagnosis of epilepsy. A diagnosis of epilepsy will generally be made after a person has had two or more seizures on separate occasions. It is important to undergo further investigations to try and find out the cause of the seizure.

#### Can I drive?

You must stop driving immediately. You should inform your insurance company (car insurance will be invalid) and GP. A medical report form (D501) will be required before you can return to driving. Some (with provoked seizures) can resume driving after six months of seizure free but will require detailed assessment by a neurologist before this.

#### Lifestyle

Having a seizure should not stop you from doing things you enjoy, although sensible safety precautions do need to be taken.

#### Do

- Inform your employer. In most cases there will be no impact on work. If your occupation involves driving, working at heights or working with machinery, there may be some restrictions
- Take showers rather than baths
- Live a healthy lifestyle. It is always sensible not to smoke, to eat a healthy diet, exercise, avoid excessive stress and tiredness and limit your alcohol intake

#### Do not

- Swim alone or go swimming with no lifeguard
- Operate machinery
- Lock the bathroom door when bathing
- Undertake activities such as water sports, climbing, or where there is a injury if you were to fall
- Bathe children by yourself

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If you are concerned, please contact the Emergency Department you first attended:

**Mercy University Hospital**  
(021) 230 5011

**M-UCC at (St. Mary's Health Campus)**  
(021) 4926900

**CUH**  
(021) 4920200

**Local Injury Unit Mallow General Hospital**  
(022) 58506

**Bantry General Hospital**  
(027) 52900



## Information for your family, friends and colleagues

### Do

- Keep calm
- Check the time, to monitor how long the seizure lasts
- Loosen clothing around the neck
- Protect the person from injury (remove sharp/hard objects from the area, or guide you to safety)
- Cushion their head
- Once seizure has finished put the person on their side or in the recovery position to aid breathing
- Stay with the person until they are fully recovered

### Don't

- Try to restrain the person or their movements
- Put anything in their mouth
- Try to move them if they are not in danger
- Give them anything to eat or drink until they are fully recovered

### When should an ambulance be called?

You should call an ambulance if

- A convulsive (shaking) seizure lasts more than five minutes
- One convulsive seizure follows another without the person regaining consciousness in between
- The person has injured themselves during a seizure or is having difficulty breathing when the seizure has finished
- The person has three convulsive seizures in an hour

You have concerns about the person's condition

### What happens next?

Generally after a first seizure no immediate treatment is needed. You can be sent home with the advice to see your GP or return to the emergency department if it occurs again.

If the cause is uncertain or the doctor feels this episode needs further investigation then you will be referred to an outpatient first seizure clinic (Dr Costello, Consultant Neurologist). You may also be started on antiepileptic medication until your appointment to see the neurologist. If you have any concerns in the interim contact your own GP.

Adapted by [Dr Serena Lazarus](#) 25/09/2023 from: <https://www.uhs.nhs.uk/Media/UHS-website-2019/Patientinformation/Brain-and-spine/First-seizure-1641-PIL.pdf>

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