

Simple Partial Seizures

Involves only one part of the brain. The symptoms the person experiences will depend on which part of the brain is involved. They will be aware of everything that is going on, they will usually be able to talk and answer questions.

The child may be unable to control various movements. They may experience twitching or numbness in one part of the body, or unusual feelings like butterflies in the stomach, an odd taste in their mouth and a powerful emotion or dizziness. Senses may be distorted causing the child to see, hear, or smell things that are not real. These can include flashes of light, buzzing in the ear and strange smells like burnt toast and rotten eggs.

Simple partial seizures sometimes develop into other sorts of seizures and they are then called an 'aura' or 'warning'. When children experiences an aura, they can take precautions e.g. finding a safe place, laying down on floor etc.

Duration: Usually last for a few seconds (2 – 10), but may last longer.

First Aid

Comfort and reassure the child if they feel confused following the seizure.

Complex Partial Seizures

Occur in only part of the brain but can take many different forms. Altered levels of consciousness can occur, often there is a loss or distorted sense of surroundings. The child will not be totally aware of what he/she is doing and will often act in a confused way. They may speak, but what is said doesn't make any sense or they may vaguely respond to someone speaking to them but in a confused way.

The child may have inappropriate automatic behaviour (automatisms) e.g. tapping the desk, picking at one's clothes, making chewing movements, lip smacking, rubbing hands together, and wandering around. After the seizure, there is usually a period of confusion and they can be very tired.

These seizures can be misunderstood and should be explained to others.

Duration: Usually last 2 to 5 minutes (sometimes longer).

First Aid

- Stay with the child.
- Protect them from injury (e.g. remove dangerous objects).
- Guide them gently away from danger.
- Do not restrain the child since s/he may become agitated and instinctively lash out. (Their unconscious reaction may be the same as someone who is drunk or high on drugs.)
- Comfort the child during and after the seizure, talk calmly and reassure and re-orient them. Wait with them until they feel they can return to what they were doing.
- Call an ambulance if the child has not begun to recover after 10 – 15 minutes.
- If a generalised tonic/clonic seizure develops, treat as for tonic clonic seizure.

PARTIAL SEIZURES WITH SECONDARILY GENERALISATION

Simple or complex partial seizures may spread to become generalised: the generalised seizure is usually a tonic-clonic seizure.