

Seizures in Adults: What You Should Know

What are seizures?

A seizure (SEE-zhure) is typically a sudden, unexpected disruption of your normal brain activity. It can make your body jerk or shake. You might repeat movements like smacking your lips or grinding your teeth. Sometimes people pass out or stare into space during a seizure. After a seizure, most people feel sleepy or confused.

What causes seizures?

Seizures can be caused by a brain injury, most often from a stroke, damage, infection, or tumor.

If you stop using alcohol or some drugs, you can have side effects called withdrawal. Withdrawal sometimes causes seizures.

Some medicines also can cause seizures. If you take regular medicine, make sure you have a plan with your doctor before you stop taking it.

Less commonly, you might have a seizure disorder called epilepsy.

How can people stay safe during a seizure?

Most seizures only last a few minutes and stop by themselves. While someone is having a seizure, the people around them should move sharp objects away and help them lie on their side.

Bystanders should not hold down a person who is having a seizure or put anything in their mouth. They

should call 9-1-1 if the seizure lasts longer than a few minutes.

If you have never had a seizure before, get medical help right away. See your doctor immediately or go to the emergency room.

Are seizures dangerous?

Seizures can be dangerous if they do not stop. You can also get hurt if a seizure happens during certain activities like driving, swimming, or working on a ladder. Some states will not let you drive until you have had no seizures for several months.

If I have one seizure, will I have another one?

Most adults who have one seizure will not have another one. If you have more than one seizure, you may have epilepsy.

Your doctor may do tests to find out what is causing your seizures. You may need medicine to stop having more seizures.

Where can I find more information?

Your doctor

Epilepsy Foundation
<http://www.epilepsy.com>

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