

Caregiver Care Guide: *Seizures*

What is a Seizure?

- Abnormal electrical disturbance in the brain which causes abnormal movements such as jerking and/or decreased responsiveness
- Seizures can be caused by injury to the brain such as a stroke or tumor

What are some Symptoms of a Seizure?

- Uncontrolled jerking of parts of the body or of the whole body
- Staring “off into space” with inability to respond
- Stiffening or rigidity of the body
- Loss of consciousness which can lead to loss of bladder and bowel control

What should I do if someone is having a Seizure?

- Stay with the person and try to stay calm.
- If able, try to time the seizure; most seizures resolve in < 2 minutes
- Make sure that the environment is safe - move objects which could cause the person harm
- Do not try to restrain the person if he/she is jerking uncontrollably
- Do not try to put anything inside the mouth as this can cause injury
- Turn the person on his/her side after the seizure if unresponsive (many people will be sleepy or unresponsive after a seizure)
- Wait to give anything that the person would need to swallow until he/she is fully awake

What can increase the risk of having a Seizure?

- Physical stress on the body such as not sleeping, fever, diarrhea or vomiting
- Emotional stress
- Missing doses of medications used to treat or prevent a seizure
- Use of some medications, herbal supplements or alcohol and illegal drugs
- Tell your hospice team all medications/supplements being taken

How are Seizures Treated?

- Medications taken on a regular basis can reduce the risk of having seizures
- Medications can also be given rectally or in the nose to help stop a seizure once it starts.

*Contact your hospice team as soon as possible when a **Seizure** occurs.*