

Febrile Seizure Advice Sheet

A febrile seizure (also known as a febrile convulsion) occurs in some children with a high temperature (fever) during an illness. Although alarming, a febrile seizure is not usually dangerous and full recovery is usual. No treatment is usually needed for the seizure, however treatment may be required for the illness causing the fever.

- Has another seizure or does not improve.
- The seizure lasts more than 5 minutes (this includes small twitching movements even if large jerking movements have stopped).
- Has difficulty breathing.
- Was not fully conscious before the seizure or 1 hour afterwards.



You need emergency help. Please phone 999 or go straight to the nearest A&E department.

- If this is your child's first febrile seizure.
- If the seizure stops within 5 minutes but your child is still unwell and/ or the cause of fever is unknown.



Please phone your GP/111 to arrange a same day appointment or telephone assessment

- If this is not your child's first febrile seizure, the seizure lasts less than 5 minutes and the cause of the fever is known.



Please contact 111/ health visitor or see GP if required

Further advice / Follow up

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Febrile seizures are not the same as epilepsy. Epileptic seizures are not associated with fever.

WHAT CAUSES A FEBRILE SEIZURE?

- Any illness that causes a fever (high temperature).
- Most common illness that they occur with are:
 - **Ear infections**
 - **Coughs**
 - **Colds**
 - **Flu**
 - **Other viral infections**
- Serious infections such as pneumonia, kidney infections or meningitis are less common causes.
- About 3 in 100 children will have a febrile seizure.
- Most commonly occur between the ages of 18 months – 3 years.
- Rare in children under 6 months and over 6 years.

WILL MY CHILD HAVE A FUTURE SEIZURE?

- Most children have just one episode of febrile seizures.
- In about 3 in 10 children a further seizure may occur in future feverish illnesses.
- A future febrile seizure is more likely if the first seizure occurs under 15 months of age or if there is a family history of febrile seizures in close relatives.

CAN I PREVENT A FEBRILE SEIZURE?

- **No method is totally effective.**
- If your child has a high temperature measures to bring it down may be helpful:
 - Paracetamol or ibuprofen will not prevent a febrile seizure but may help to make your child more comfortable (follow manufacturer's instructions).
 - Children with a fever should not be under or overdressed.
 - Make sure the room is not too hot.
 - **Note-** wet cloths/ cool baths are **not** recommended.