

When an Employee Has a Seizure

According to the National Epilepsy Foundation, 1 in 26 people will develop epilepsy in their lifetime. Epilepsy is a neurological disorder caused by abnormal nerve cell activity in the brain. Epilepsy involves recurring seizures.

More than 30% of people with epilepsy will experience generalized seizures. It would not be unusual for a person to experience having a seizure in the workplace. When providing first aid for seizures, try to keep calm and make sure the person having the seizure is comfortable and safe from harm. A seizure can last from a second or several minutes.

Call 911 if:

- The person has never had a seizure before.
- the person has difficulty breathing or waking after the seizure.
- The seizure lasts longer than 5 minutes.
- The person has a seizure back-to back.
- The person is injured during the seizure.
- The person has an additional condition like diabetes, or heart disease.

Steps

- Ease the person to the floor.
- Turn the person gently onto the side (this will help the person breathe).
- Clear the area around the person of anything hard or sharp
- Put something soft and flat, like a folded jacket, under his or her head.
- Loosen ties or anything around the neck including button on a shirt.
- Time the seizure.

Familiarize Yourself with The Warning Signs

Each person is different. Typically warning signs of a seizure may include:

- Loss of consciousness
- Stiffening of the body
- Jerking of limbs
- Slight twitching
- A loss of awareness

Do Not:

- Do not hold the person down or try to stop his or her movements.
- Do not put anything in the person's mouth. This can injure teeth or the jaw. A person having a seizure cannot swallow his or her tongue.
- Do not try to give mouth-to-mouth breaths (CPR). People usually start breathing again on their own after a seizure.
- Do not offer the person water or food until he or she is fully alert.

After the seizure:

After the seizure ends, the person will probably be groggy and tired. He or she also may have a headache and be confused or embarrassed. Try to help the person find a place to rest. If necessary, offer to call a taxi, a friend, or a relative to help the person get home safely.

Don't try to stop the person from wandering unless he or she is in danger.

Don't shake the person or shout.

Stay with the person until he or she is completely alert.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Source: National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke