



Responding to a Seizure in the Classroom

Witnessing a seizure can be alarming, but in most cases the seizure will subside and your student will get back to normal fairly quickly. Your primary responsibility is to make sure your student does not get hurt. You will not be able to stop the seizure, but there are steps you can take to keep your student as safe as possible:

- Try to remain calm. Let the student seize, and contact the school nurse to offer assistance after the seizure has subsided.
- Try to time the duration of the seizure if you are able.
- Attempt to help the student to the floor and provide a pillow or something soft to prevent head injury. Do not hold a seizing student down.
- Move any furniture or objects that may cause injury. You may also want to remove the student's eyeglasses, if applicable.
- Do not put anything in the student's mouth. A seizing student cannot swallow his or her tongue, and you are likely to injure the student or yourself by placing something in the mouth.
- When jerking movement stops, lay the student on his or her side. It is not uncommon for someone who has had a seizure to vomit, and this will help prevent the student from choking. Then, let the student rest in this position until he or she regains consciousness.
- When regaining consciousness, the student will likely be confused and disoriented. After the seizure, reassure the student that he or she is safe. You or the school nurse should stay with your student and not let him or her eat or drink until fully alert. Once the student is fully alert, let him or her know about the seizure and how long it lasted.
- **If a seizure lasts more than 5 minutes** or you see that the student is having more than one seizure without regaining consciousness, call an ambulance immediately—this is a medical emergency that requires advanced care.
- Call the student's parents according to the instructions they have given you.
- If the seizure was witnessed by members of the class, it is important to discuss the event with them. This will help to give your class an understanding of what has happened, put them at ease, calm any fears, and help minimize ill feelings toward or humiliation of the student who had the seizure.

For more information about epilepsy and seizures, and for suggestions about how to speak with your class, we invite you to visit www.epilepsyclassroom.com.