

Tip-sheet for caregivers

Understanding epilepsy, nodding syndrome and the importance of medication

WHY?

Seizures can be caused by a condition called 'Epilepsy'. This is not contagious, it is not a spirit that possesses the person. Medication might be needed to control the seizures. Ask a doctor for advice.

Seizures can also be due to 'Nodding Syndrome' and often accompanied with repetitive nodding (dropping down) of the head, and/or staring spells. Nodding Syndrome is infectious and its cause unknown. This condition can affect physical and intellectual growth, and lead to injuries or death related to seizures. **In case of Nodding Syndrome symptoms, consult a doctor.**

HOW?

✓ Symptoms:



SHAKING



CONFUSED
SPEECH



FUMBLING



WANDERING



BLANK STARING



CHEWING & BITING

WHAT?

✓ Take the person to a health centre to see a doctor immediately when:

- Seizure lasts longer than 5 minutes
- When seizure repeats
- Person is injured or sick
- Difficulty breathing
- Seizure occurs in water
- First time seizure



WHAT?

What to do in case of a seizure



1. Block Hazards



2. Loosen tight clothing



3. Don't put anything in the mouth



4. Roll the person to the side



5. Cushion the head with a pillow or clothes



6. Time the seizure with a clock or watch (most seizures should end in a few minutes)



7. Do not grab and hold the person



8. Speak calmly



9. Explain to others



10. Stay with the person till they are awake and alert

With appropriate medication, a person can function normally, go to school or work, play and be included in the community.

- ✓ Give appropriate, prescribed epileptic medication at the right time
- ✓ Make sure to refill the epilepsy medication in time so there are not gaps in taking medication
- ✓ Keep the medicine in a safe and dry place



Keep an eye on changing behaviour of the person with epilepsy this might mean there is a problem.

- ✗ Irregular bed time
- ✗ Swimming alone
- ✗ Climbing high things



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NOTES

Sit and move your hands is important to:

- prevent muscles to shorten [other word for contractures: limbs getting stuck ?]
- use your arms and hands
- interact with other people
- understand each other
- keep bones strong
- better sleep at night
- better blood flow to muscles and organs
- keep lungs strong to cough and make sounds
- eat and drink safely without choking
- better bowel movement: less constipation
- experience the world upright and learn from it, enjoy it