

# Seizure Disorders

## FACTS:

- The brain is made up of millions of nerve cells gathered together. By passing electrical signals to each other these nerve cells can control the body's function, senses and thoughts. Sometimes the process of exchanging signals is suddenly interrupted and a seizure occurs. If a person has more than one such seizure over a long period of time, they may have epilepsy.
- There are different types of seizures, based on the part of the brain that is involved. Some seizures present with sudden uncontrollable limb movements and unconsciousness, some present with staring and strange behavior and some are only noticed by the child that is experiencing the seizure.
- Seizures usually begin in childhood, although they can happen at any age.
- In most cases the cause is unknown. The most common known cause is a high fever. These are called "febrile seizures" and are not considered epilepsy. There are no long-term effects from these seizures, and children will usually not have any seizures when they are older. Febrile seizures do not need any treatment.
- Other known causes for seizures include infections, metabolic problems, drugs and medications, poisons, bleeding inside the brain and head injuries.



**A child with multiple seizures should be seen by a doctor for treatment.**



**Many seizures occur when a child has a high fever.**

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## TREATMENT:

- All children who have a seizure for the first time, as well as children with known seizure disorders, should be evaluated by a doctor. Any child with repeated or prolonged seizures (lasting over five minutes) or trouble breathing should go to the hospital immediately.
- Most children with epilepsy are treated with medications which prevent seizures from occurring.
- Surgery may be an option for a few children who do not respond to medication.
- Most children with epilepsy have normal learning ability and intelligence. They can attend school and lead normal lives just as other children.



**Epilepsy can often be treated with medication.**



**Children who have seizures can live very happy lives!**