



A guide to...

# First Fit

## *Patient Information*

Children's Emergency Department (CED)  
Watford General Hospital



### **Caring for your child**

Your child has had their first fit and your clinical does not believe it is related to a sudden rise in their body temperature ("febrile convulsion")

We are happy that your child is well enough to be taken home under your supervision.

### **What is a fit?**

A fit, or seizure, is a sudden disturbance in the brain that affects how a person appears or acts. Seizures, and how your child recovers after them, can vary from one child to another.

One type of seizure that you may have heard of, is an epileptic seizure of which there are many types. Children can also have events that are similar to seizures but they are not — these include faints, tics, daydreams, sleep disorders and breath-holding episodes.

### **Is it epilepsy?**

If your child has had only one seizure, it does not always mean they have epilepsy. Some children will never have another one.

If your child goes on to have more seizures, then further medical review and investigations will need to be done.

### **Investigations and Treatment**

Your child will have had their blood sugar, vital signs (temperature, heart rate, blood pressure and respiratory rate), and ECG checked. There are no other required investigations following a first fit usually.

There is also no specific treatment following a self resolving first fit.

If your child goes on to have more seizures, then they will have further investigations — but this will not be ordered from the Emergency Department; they will be referred to our paediatric outpatients department for review by a paediatrician with specialist neurology interest.

## First aid for a convulsive seizure

A convulsive seizure is where the child is stiff or shaking.

### DO:

- Stay calm
- Protect them from injury (remove potentially harmful objects from nearby)
- Cushion or gently hold your child's head to protect them from head injury
- Note the time the seizure started — if stiffness and or jerking continues for five minutes or more you should call 999 for an ambulance to assist
- Turn your child onto their side, preferably in the recovery position. This can help with breathing and help if they vomit or have other types of fluid in their mouth. Some noisy breathing and colour change is normal.
- If possible, try to film the seizure on a mobile phone as it can provide a lot of useful information for the clinician.
- Stay with your child until they have fully recovered
- Your child may be confused, drowsy or fall asleep after a seizure — reassure them if they are confused, let them rest or sleep but keep a close eye until they are recovered.

### DO NOT

- Restrain or restrict your child's movements
- Move your child unless they are in danger
- Put anything in their mouth
- Give your child anything to eat or drink until they are fully recovered

### Call 999 if:

- You are concerned or need help
- You feel that your child needs medical attention
- The seizure has continued for more than five minutes
- Your child has a second seizure before being fully recovered

## Do I need to do anything differently now?

It is important to let your child return to their usual activities as soon as possible.

As they have had a recent seizure, it is important to take extra care with some activities:

- **Bathing:** a shower, is better than a bath. Your child should be supervised at all times by a responsible adult if having a bath.
- **Climbing:** your child should not climb anything taller than their own height unless they are wearing a harness and being supervised.
- **Cycling:** your child can still ride a bicycle or scooter, but they should always wear a helmet and you should consider whether they are allowed on roads or need supervision.
- **Swimming:** your child can go swimming but must be supervised at all times by a responsible adult.

Ensure you inform your child's nursery or school and any other clubs they attend eg: scouting, sports clubs, etc.

If you need this leaflet in another language, large print, Braille or audio version, please call **01923 217 187** or email **westherts.pals@nhs.uk**



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