

## Controlling seizures at home

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Before you take your baby home, you will need to learn:

- ✓ What to do when your baby has a seizure
- ✓ How to give your baby's medication
- ✓ What side effects to watch for
- ✓ What follow-up care your baby needs at home

### What should I do if my baby is having a seizure?

**Try to stay calm. Stay with your baby. Do all of the following:**

- Move all things away from your baby.
- Loosen your baby's clothing.
- Turn your baby on his or her side.
- Try to remember how long the seizure lasts.
- Try to remember your baby's movements during the seizure.  
For example: Is it the right or left side, arms and legs, twitching or shaking, head or eyes to one side. This information can help to determine what type of seizure your baby is having.

**If the seizure lasts less than 5 minutes, you do not need to go to the emergency room.**

- When the seizure is over, call your baby's doctor. Tell the doctor about the seizure, so that he or she can make changes in your baby's medication, if needed.

#### **When should I call 911?**

**Call 911 for emergency medical help:**

- **If the seizure lasts more than 5 minutes.**
  - **If there is a change in your baby's colour or breathing.**
  - **If your baby stops breathing.**
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## Are seizures harmful?

Seizures are very frightening to parents, but not life threatening for babies. Babies breathe during and after a seizure. When the seizure ends, normal brain activity returns.

After a seizure, your baby may be very drowsy or sleepy. If there is any harm to your baby's health or development it will depend on what is causing the seizures. Please discuss this with your baby's doctor.

## How are seizures controlled?

Your baby's seizures may be controlled with medication. Your baby's doctor will decide which medication(s) your baby needs and how long to give them.

Your baby's nurse or your pharmacist will help you learn:

- The name of the medication and how it works.
- How much medication your baby needs.
- When and how to give the medication.

Your baby may need blood tests to see how much medication is in his or her body. Your baby's doctor will use the results of the blood tests to decide how much medication your baby needs. The dose may be increased as your baby grows.

Always give the amount of medication that the doctor ordered. Do not stop giving your baby this medication without a doctor's order as this may cause a seizure.

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## What side effects are possible with the medication?

Medications that control seizures may have some side effects.

Call your doctor right away if you notice that your baby:

- is more sleepy than usual
- has cold hands and feet
- has wet palms of the hands and soles of the feet
- breathes faster or slower than usual
- turns a pale colour or has bluish lips

**If you are not able to reach your doctor, take your baby to the nearest hospital Emergency Department.**

## What follow-up care will my baby need?

Your family doctor or pediatrician can care for your baby's general health.

Your baby may also need regular visits with a neurologist, a doctor who specializes in the brain and nervous system. The neurologist will check the development of your baby's brain and nervous system and make decisions about your baby's medication.

Tests such as a CT scan, MRI or EEG may be needed to check brain development and look for any seizure activity in the brain.

