

Seizure training

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Session overview

- 1) Different **types and causes** of seizures
- 2) Increase your confidence in managing **alcohol related and drug related** seizures
- 3) What to do **before, during and after** a seizure
- 4) Learn how to recognise when a seizure is an **emergency**
- 5) Discuss how to **prevent** seizures including medication and detox

Different types and causes of seizures

Seizure definition

“A sudden burst or disruption to electrical activity in the brain that can alter one or more of the following:
- Movement - Sensation - Behaviour – Awareness”



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Causes

Epilepsy

Alcohol/ drugs

Hypoglycaemia (low sugar)

Head injury

Low oxygen

Seizures are caused by abnormal electrical activity in the brain

Generalised seizures

- All of the brain is affected
- The person is unconscious



Focal seizures

- One area of the brain is affected
- The person may have impaired consciousness or be fully aware

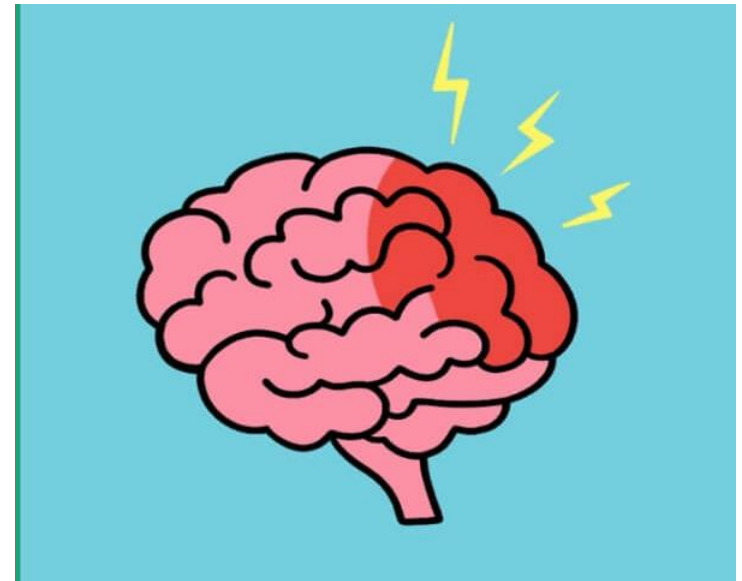


Seizure types- Partial seizures

- Involve only part of the brain .Common types include **focal** seizures with or without impaired awareness. Symptoms relate to the part of the brain affected

Simple focal seizure (aware throughout)

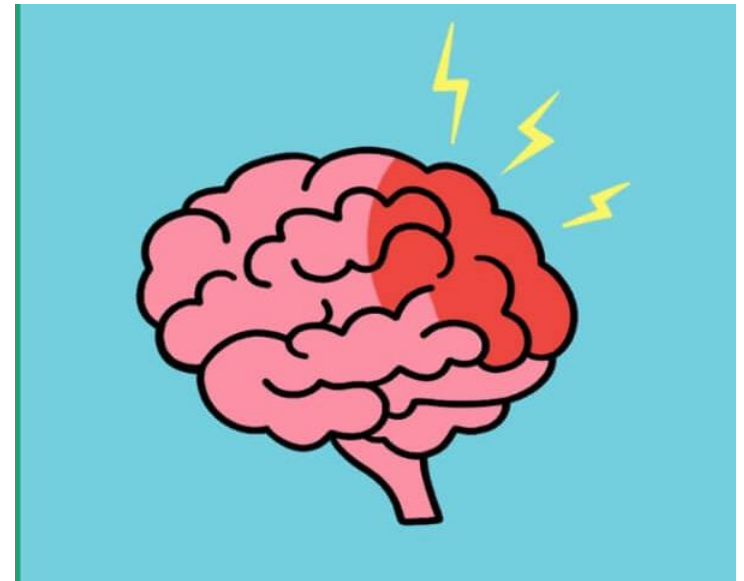
- Strange feeling
- Déjà vu sensation
- Unusual smells/ taste
- Tingling in arms legs
- Intense feeling of fear or joy
- Can be a warning for another seizure



Seizure types- Partial seizures

Complex focal seizure:

- Lapse of awareness
- Pause in activity with a blank stare
- Abnormal, often repetitive movements
- Easily mistaken for day-dreaming
- Can last a few seconds to a few minutes



Focal seizure- example

[Focal Seizures with Impaired Awareness \(formerly known as Complex Partial\) - YouTube](#)

Seizure type- Generalised Seizures

Tonic-Clonic seizures (involve entire brain)

2 stages “tonic” followed by “clonic” (not usually > 3 minutes)

- **Tonic stage-**

- Lose consciousness
- Body goes stiff
- Fall to floor

- **Clonic stage**

- Convulsions (limbs jerk)
- Incontinence bladder/ bowel
- Tongue biting
- Difficulty breathing- shallow, blue lips



Post seizure- headache, drowsiness, confusion, speech difficulty

Generalised seizure- example

- [Tonic Clonic seizure \(grand mal seizure\) – YouTube](#)
- [**TRIGGER WARNING** Having a tonic clonic grand mal epilepsy seizure. - YouTube](#)

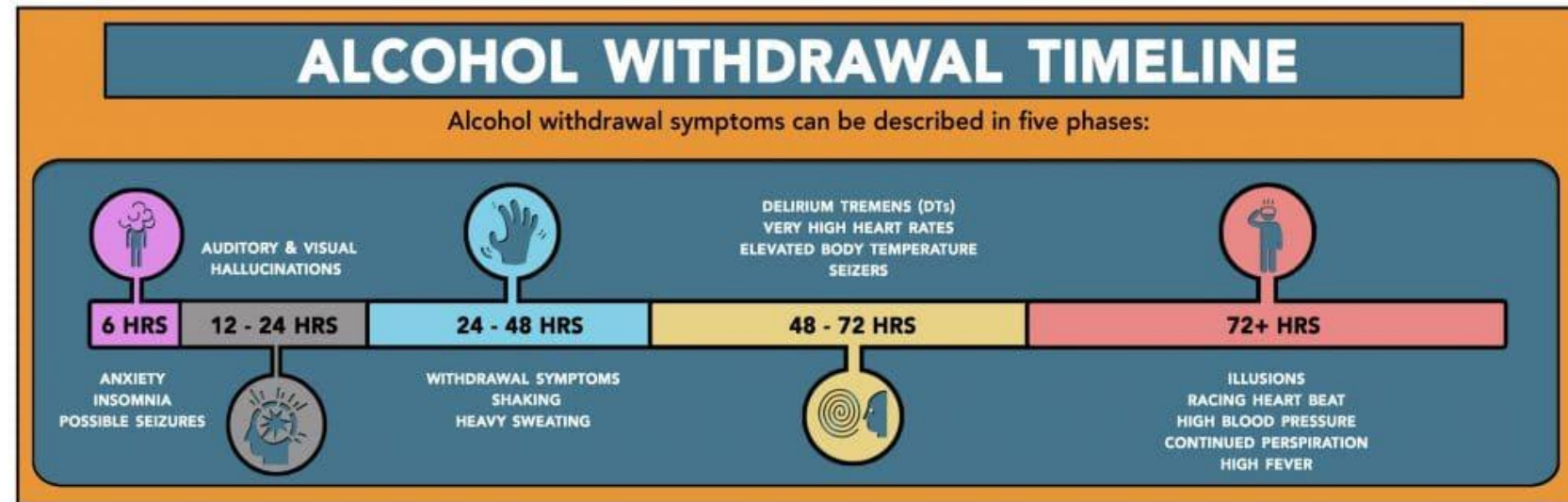
Seizure type- Alcohol related seizures



- Regularly drinking a lot of alcohol can cause physical dependence.
- This means that alcohol withdrawal symptoms may develop if alcohol is suddenly stopped or reduced
- Symptoms can occur within 2 to 12 hours after the last alcoholic drink and are at their most severe 48 - 72 hours
- High risk of seizures if someone has had multiple detox's in the past
- Tonic-Clonic seizures
- Will most likely need medication to stop seizures from happening again (**this needs to be done in a hospital setting**)

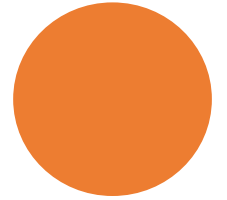
Seizure type- Alcohol withdrawal seizure

- Minor Symptoms can include:
- Shaking hands
- Profuse Sweating
- Anxiety
- Restless / Agitated
- Palpitations
- Craving for alcohol
- Hallucinations (visual, auditory or tactile)



Seizure type- SPICE related seizure

- Seizures can vary from Absent/ Focal to Generalised Tonic-Clonic
- Most symptoms are self-limiting and resolve on their own
- Is sometimes used alongside other drugs (poly-drug use)
- There is no current antidote to SPICE
- Treatments are based on how someone presents
- If someone has used more than one drug, see if you are able to find out from the patient or friend what else they have taken



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Seizure
Management

Before
During
After



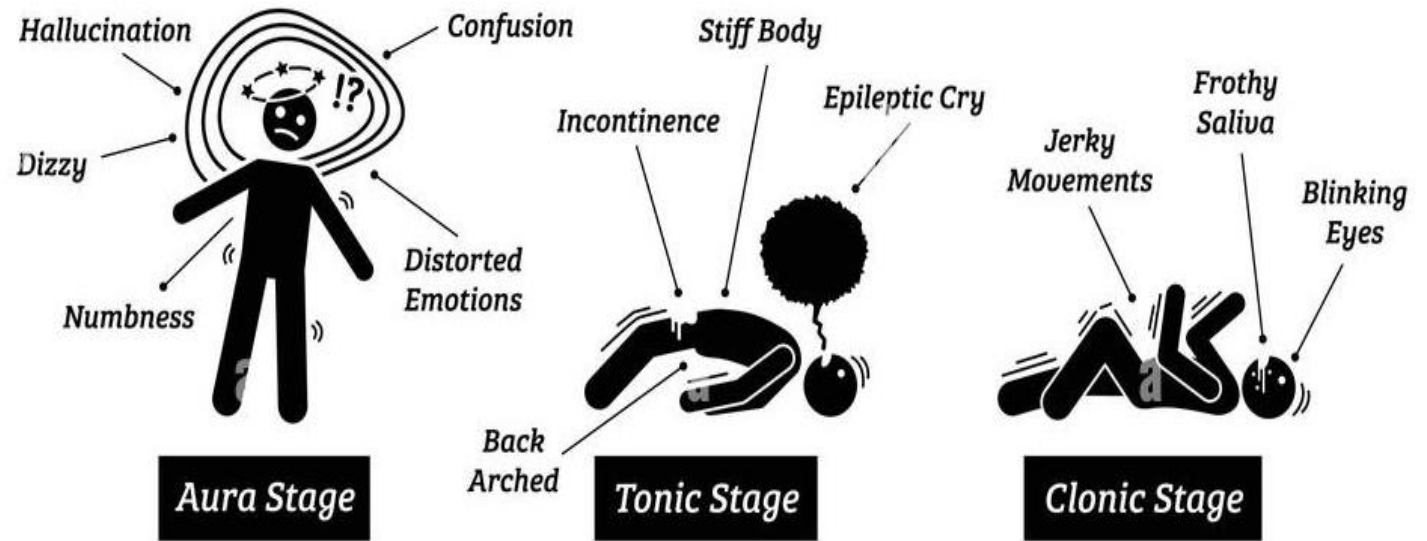
- [Take Epilepsy Action - First aid for seizures - YouTube](#)

Seizure: **Before**

- Person may be confused/ vacant
- Drinking habits changed
- Not taken medication

Seizure: During

- Sudden loss of consciousness
- Arched/ rigid back
- Noisy or difficult breathing
- Convulsive movement
- Saliva at the mouth- ? blood stained (bitten tongue or cheek)
- Loss of control of bladder or bowels

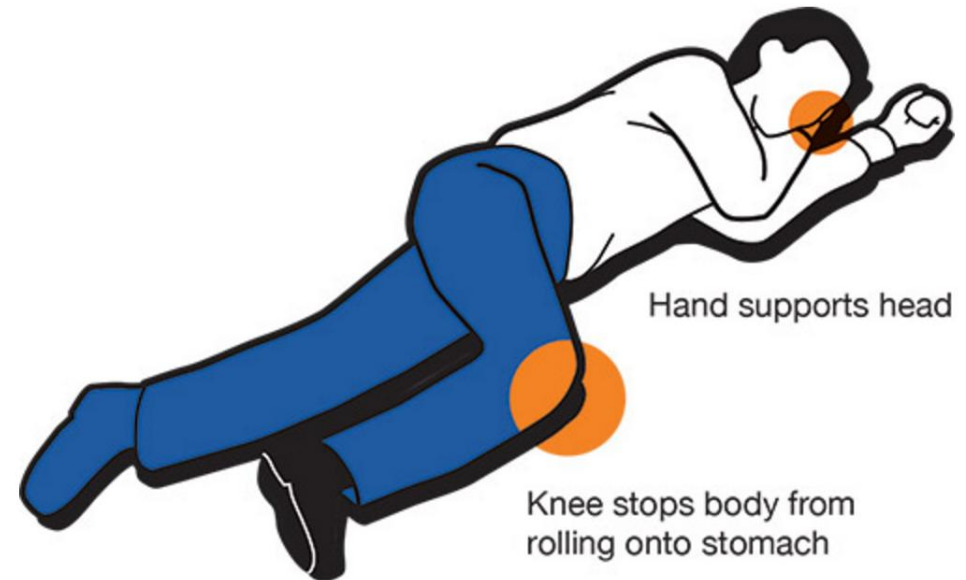


Seizure: During

- Stay **calm**
- **Time** the seizure (>5mins??)
- Remove possible hazards (neck ties, chairs, tables, sharp objects)
- Cushion the head (use hand if nothing else available)
- If person changes colour ?something in airway, lift chin and tilt head
- Check for Epilepsy or seizure I.D bracelet, necklace, card

Seizure: After

- Open the airway
- Check breathing
- If breathing- put into the recovery position
- Monitor
- Stay with the person until they have recovered from the seizure and offer support



DO NOT

DO NOT put anything in the patient's mouth

- DO NOT hold down or restrain

- DO NOT attempt to give oral medications, food or drink during a seizure

- www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ovsw7tdneqE
- From 1 minute

Seizure emergencies- when to call 999

- If the seizure lasts more than **5 minutes**
- If **one seizure follows another** before they have fully recovered
- If it is the persons **first seizure**
- **Alcohol related** seizure
- Cause not known
- If **unresponsive for more than 10 minutes**
- If they are **injured, diabetic or pregnant**
- If a normal breathing pattern does not resume

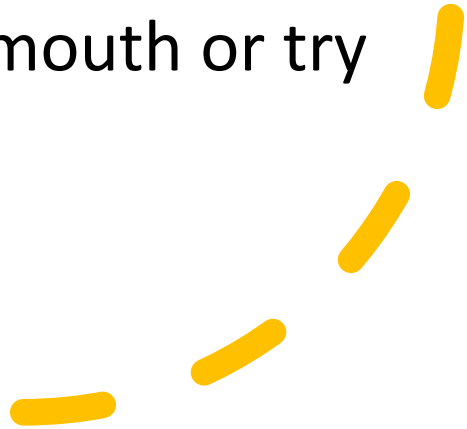
Seizure prevention



Seizure prevention

- Sudden stops or changes in their drinking can trigger a seizure
- Recommend seeking medical advice- through drug/ alcohol services before stopping drinking rather than self detoxing
 - If have to do yourself then should be done over several weeks- aim to reduce units by no more than 10% every 4 days if you are drinking more than 25 units per week
 - If you start to experience withdrawal symptoms, this means you are cutting down too rapidly. Stabilise for one week and then cut down by 10% each week
 - Often easier to cut down drinks in the middle of the day, especially if rely on alcohol to sleep
 - If have had seizures in the past or have severe symptoms then may be given medication to aid detox
 - Recognise signs of withdrawal early and seek help

Take home
messages-
ACTION

- **A**ssess- dangerous/ sharp objects
 - **C**ushion- cushion head to protect against head injury
 - **T**ime- check time (5 minute cut off)
 - **I**dentity- look for bracelet or ID card
 - **O**ver- check breathing, recovery position
 - **N**ever- restrain, put anything in mouth or try to give food/ drink
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Resources

- What to do when someone has a seizure St John's Ambulance video: www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ovsw7tdneqE
- Take Epilepsy Action video on seizure first aid: www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q4C-R52Ffy4
- Visit to read more information on seizures and how you can help during the seizure www.epilepsysociety.org.uk/about-epilepsy/first-aid-epileptic-seizures/seizure-first-aid
- Alcohol detox information- www.yorkhospitals.nhs.uk/seecmsfile/?id=2856
- Local resources:
 - Substance Use Services directory- <https://groundswell.org.uk/all-resources/westminster-hhcp/health-directories/>
 - Alcohol liaison nurses at hospitals
 - Turning Point/ Alcohol service Bi-borough substance use team.