

# Febrile Seizures

**This leaflet offers more information about febrile seizures. If you have any further questions or concerns, please speak to the staff member in charge of your child's care.**

## What is a febrile seizure?

A febrile seizure is a fit that happens when your child has a high temperature. They are most common between the ages of 18 months and three years, but can occur anytime from six months to six years old. Febrile seizures are rare in children younger than six months or older than six years.

Infections that are often linked to febrile convulsions are:

- Ear infections
- Colds
- Tonsillitis
- Coughs.

Some children (around 3 in 10) will have more than one febrile seizure in childhood. The risk of having a second febrile seizure is higher if your child is younger than one year old when they have the first febrile seizure.

Febrile seizures are NOT epilepsy. The chance of developing epilepsy in a child who has febrile seizures is about 1 in 50, compared to a 1 in 100 chance of epilepsy in those children without a history of febrile seizures.

## What are the signs and symptoms?

Most febrile seizures last between one and five minutes. During the seizure your child may

- Look flushed
- Look dazed and confused
- Their muscles may tighten and they may fall to the floor
- Their arms, legs and body may be stiff and jerking
- Their eyes may roll back
- They may hold their breath, causing them to look pale or a little blue
- They may wet themselves
- They may bite their tongue
- After the seizure, your child may be tired and upset.

## What treatments are available?

Usually no treatment is needed for a febrile seizure. Sometimes treatment is needed for the infection that has caused the high temperature.

## Is there anything I can do to help my child?

We do not have a way to stop children having febrile seizures. When your child has an infection which is causing a high temperature you can:

- Consider giving them paracetamol and ibuprofen (follow instructions on the bottle)
- Encourage them to drink lots of fluids.

You should **NOT**:

- Wrap them in layers of clothing or blankets (children often shiver when they have a fever to try to cool themselves down, not because they are cold).
- Sponge them with cold water/give them a cold bath.
- Take them into bed with you – this can make their temperature get even higher.

## What should I do if my child has another febrile seizure?

- Stay calm.
- Lie them on a soft surface and remove anything sharp from nearby.
- Lie them on their side and tilt their head back a little, this helps open up their air passages and stops them swallowing vomit.
- Don't put anything in their mouth (including fluids, medicine and fingers).
- If the seizure lasts less than five minutes, you can call NHS 111 for advice.

Bring your child to the Children's Emergency Department if:

- They don't wake up properly within an hour of the seizure,
- This is their second seizure in 24 hours.

### Call an ambulance if

- **Your child holds their breath for more than 30 seconds.**
- **The seizure lasts for longer than five minutes.**

**For more information leaflets on conditions, procedures, treatments and services offered at our hospitals, please visit [www.stgeorges.nhs.uk](http://www.stgeorges.nhs.uk)**

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## Additional services

### Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS can offer you on-the-spot advice and information when you have comments or concerns about our services or the care you have received. You can visit the PALS office between 9.30am and 4.30pm, Monday to Friday in the main corridor between Grosvenor and Lanesborough wings (near the lift foyer).

**Tel:** 020 8725 2453 **Email:** [pals@stgeorges.nhs.uk](mailto:pals@stgeorges.nhs.uk)

## **NHS Choices**

NHS Choices provides online information and guidance on all aspects of health and healthcare, to help you make decisions about your health.

**Web:** [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

## **NHS 111**

You can call 111 when you need medical help fast but it's not a 999 emergency. NHS 111 is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Calls are free from landlines and mobile phones.

**Tel:** 111

## **AccessAble**

You can download accessibility guides for all of our services by searching 'St George's Hospital' on the AccessAble website ([www.accessable.co.uk](http://www.accessable.co.uk)). The guides are designed to ensure everyone – including those with accessibility needs – can access our and community sites with confidence.



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