Epilepsy 101

Seizure Observation and Emergency Help
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Tips for Seizures Observation and Recording

When watching a seizure, observe:

- What happens before, during and after the event
- Write down what happened as soon as you can
- Include as much information as possible
Tips for Seizure Observation

Before the Seizure

- What was person doing at time of event
- Change in mood or behavior hours or days before
- ‘Warning’ or ‘aura’ shortly before event
- Possible triggers or precipitants
- When seizures occurs – date, time, duration
Tips for Seizure Observation

What Happens After Event

- Response to voice or touch
- Awareness of name, place, time
- Memory for events
- Ability to talk or communicate
- Weakness or numbness
- Changes in mood or how person acts
- Fatigue, sedation
When to Seek Medical Attention

- History of seizure recurrence in person with rare or well-controlled seizures
- Person with known epilepsy but occurrence of new seizure type
- First time seizure
- Persistent side effects of treatment bothersome to patient
When to Call for Emergency Help

- When seizures..
  - approach 5 minutes in duration or per patient’s seizure action plan
  - one seizure occurs after another
  - last longer than typical events

- When person..
  - doesn’t return to baseline in usual period of time
  - has first seizure
  - has suspected injury
  - is pregnant or diabetic

- When observer is unsure or uncomfortable
Injuries from Seizures

- **Immediate**
  - Lacerations
  - Bruises
  - Burns
  - Head trauma
  - Fractures
  - Drowning/near drowning

- **Delayed**
  - Fever
  - Aspiration pneumonia
  - Subdural hematomas
  - Fractures (delayed recognition)
  - Change in seizures or seizure emergencies
Seizure Assessment Algorithm

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For Nurses Caring for People with Epilepsy

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