

MATTHEW S. COHEN, MD FAAP  
PATIENT INSTRUCTION SHEET

**FEBRILE SEIZURE**

Your child has had a seizure (“**convulsion**”) resulting from a fever. Many young children sometimes have a seizure when they have a fever. Having this kind of seizure does **NOT** mean that your child is brain damaged, or that he/she will have convulsions for the rest of his/her life. Most children outgrow this problem as they get older.

Take your child’s temperature every 3 to 4 hours, during this illness and whenever he/she becomes ill.

If you child has a fever:

α Give Tylenol \_\_\_\_\_ every 4 hours.

α Give Motrin \_\_\_\_\_ every 6 hours.

α Alternate Tylenol and Motrin as instructed by the doctor. Instructions:

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Do not overdress your child when they have a fever.

**NEVER USE ALCOHOL BATHS. NEVER USE ASPIRIN.**

If the child should have another seizure at home – **STAY CALM!!!**

- Turn his/her head to the side if he/she begins to vomit. Do not put anything in your child’s mouth, (including your fingers) when he/she is having a seizure.
- Protect him/her injuring himself while he/she is having the seizure.
- When the seizure is over, you child will be sleepy. Bring your child to the Pediatric Emergency Room to be examined.

**Special Instructions:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

If you have any questions, please call.

## Febrile Seizures

In some children, fevers can trigger seizures. Febrile seizures occur in 2 percent to 5 percent of all children between the ages of 6 months and 5 years. Seizures, sometimes called "fits" or "spells," are frightening, but they usually are harmless.

Febrile seizures usually happen during the first few hours of a fever. The child may look strange for a few moments, then stiffen, twitch and roll his eyes. He or she will be unresponsive for a short time, breathing will be disturbed, and skin may appear a little darker than usual. After the seizure, the child quickly returns to normal. Seizures usually last less than one minute but, although uncommon, can last for up to 15 minutes.

Febrile seizures rarely happen more than once within a 24-hour period. Other kinds of seizures (ones that are not caused by fever) last longer, can affect only one part of the body, and may occur repeatedly.

If your child has a febrile seizure, act immediately to prevent injury.

- Place your child on the floor or bed away from any hard or sharp objects.
- Turn his or her head to the side so that any saliva or vomit can drain from the mouth.
- Do not put anything into his or her mouth; your child will not swallow his or her tongue.
- Call your pediatrician.

Febrile seizures tend to run in families. The risk of having seizures with other episodes of fever depends on the age of your child. Children younger than 1 year of age at the time of their first seizure have about a 50 percent chance of having another febrile seizure. Children older than 1 year of age at the time of their first seizure have only a 30 percent chance of having a second febrile seizure.