

Paediatric Department

Caring for my child after a febrile convulsion

If your child has had a febrile convulsion, this may have been a very frightening experience for you. However, most children who have had a febrile convulsion do not need to stay in hospital and can go home. This leaflet gives you advice on how to care for your child at home after being to hospital.

What are febrile convulsions?

- Febrile convulsions are a fit or seizure that can happen when a child has a fever.
- They occur in about 1 in 30 children who have a fever, most commonly between 6 months – 6 years of age
- They often occur on the first day of a feverish illness. There appears to be no connection between how high the child's temperature is and the chance of having a fit, so they can occur even with mild fevers
- Any illness which causes a temperature may result in a febrile convulsion, such as a head cold or other viral infection
- Febrile convulsions are **not** epilepsy.

What happens?

- The whole body becomes stiff and then their arms and legs may twitch
- They may lose consciousness and may wet or soil themselves
- They may be sick and foam at the mouth, and their eyes may roll back
- Simple febrile convulsions usually last less than 5 minutes

- They may be sleepy after but should be back to their normal self within a few hours.

Could it happen again?

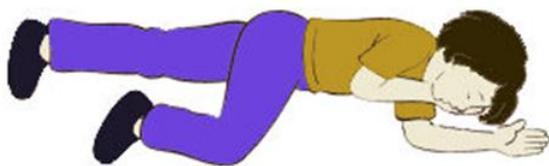
- 1 in 3 children who have febrile convulsions may have further convulsions with febrile illnesses in the future
- Regular treatment to prevent future seizures is usually not necessary. 99% of children with febrile convulsions never have seizures after they reach school age.

What do I do if my child has another febrile convulsion?

- ➔ Try to remain calm and follow these steps:
- ➔ Make sure your child is safe, on a firm surface, with no objects around which they could be harmed by
- ➔ If possible, try to place them in the recovery position - on their side, on a soft surface with their face turned to one side as this will stop them choking on any vomit and keep their airway protected
- ➔ Stay with your child and try to note down what time their seizure starts and stops. It may also help to video the seizure to show the doctor later
- ➔ **Do not put** anything in your child's mouth or shake them
- ➔ **If the seizure lasts longer than 5 minutes - Call 999 immediately**
- ➔ **If the seizure lasts less than 5 minutes - Call your GP or NHS 111 if you are worried.**

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Child recovery position

How do I look after my child if they get another fever?

If your child does have another fever (high temperature):

- Keep a close watch on them and **do not** let them bathe or shower unattended or unsupervised
- Swimming is **not** advised
- Try to cool them down by removing clothing, encouraging drinks, and giving a dose of paracetamol or ibuprofen (always read the labels and do not exceed recommended dose for age)
- **Do not** use icy water, or a fan directly on them – these encourage children to shiver which may make their temperature even higher

- Keep a close eye on your child when they have an infection; seek advice from GP or NHS 111 if you are worried
- Offer fluids often to make sure they are well hydrated
- If your child has another seizure follow the steps above

For more information you can also read our leaflet at: <https://kingstonhospital.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/A0088-Fever-high-temperature-in-children.pdf>

Or scan this QR code



Trusted sources of further information

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/febrile-seizures/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/first-aid/recovery-position/>

Patient Advice and Liaison Services (PALS)

PALS can provide information, advice and support to patients and relatives and will listen to and act on your concerns, suggestions or queries.

020 8934 3993

khft.pals@nhs.net

Accessible information

We are actively working to make our patient information easier to read and accessible in a range of formats. If you would like this information in large print, audio or electronic format please speak to a member of staff in the department. If you need a different format, please let us know and we will do our best to meet your request

Pastoral & Spiritual Support Services

We offer a multi-cultural approach serving people of all faiths and life philosophies. A Duty Chaplain is available 24/7. You can request to speak to a Church of England or Roman Catholic Priest, the Rabbi or Imam.

Please call the hospital switchboard on 020 8546 7711 and ask to speak to the Duty Chaplain.

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