

FEBRILE SEIZURES

About 1 in 5 normal children between the ages of 6 months and 6 years, most commonly around 1 year of age, will have a short seizure (convulsion) with rapidly rising fever. Febrile seizures are caused by the immaturity of the brain and stop occurring when the child is older. Only 1/3 of children who have one will ever have another. Febrile seizures tend to occur as the temperature is rising, especially at the beginning of the illness, and there is no evidence that using Motrin or Tylenol can prevent them.

These seizures **ARE NOT DANGEROUS**, will not cause the child to die, swallow his or her tongue, or cause brain damage. They are, however, very frightening to watch. The child becomes unconscious and has stiffening and then often jerking movements of the arms and legs. They can foam at the mouth, look blue around the lips and mouth, and their eyes may roll back in the head. The seizure generally only lasts 3-5 minutes and stop by themselves. If your child has a febrile seizure, lay the child on his or her side or stomach and watch closely as to what the eyes, arms and legs are doing and how long the seizure lasts so you can give us that information. Call us, not 911, unless the seizure lasts for more than 20 minutes. The child will usually be very sleepy for ½ hour after the seizure and will not remember it.

Not all seizures with fever are febrile seizures, and each child needs to be seen and evaluated.