
Febrile Seizures

(Convulsion with Fever)



What are febrile seizures?

Febrile seizures are the most common type of seizures in children and are typically triggered by a fever spike, usually more than 38.3°C. They occur in 2-5% of children between the ages of 6 months to 6 years old.

During a febrile seizure, parents/caregivers should look out for the following symptoms:

- Eyes rolling back
- Frothing at the mouth
- Stiffening and jerking of the upper and lower limbs
- Loss of consciousness



Most febrile seizures stop spontaneously within five minutes and the child regains consciousness thereafter. Infrequently, the seizure may last longer than 30 minutes.

Although febrile seizures can look frightening to caregivers, those lasting less than 15 minutes do not cause any long-term health problems such as brain damage. However, seizures lasting more than 30 minutes can result in complications such as lack of oxygen to the brain hence immediate medical treatment should be sought.

Approximately 2/3 of children who experienced a febrile seizure will not have any future recurrences. The remaining fraction, on the other hand, are more likely to have repeated episodes until they reach 6 years of age. Only 3% of children with febrile seizures may go on to have seizures not associated with fever, otherwise known as epilepsy.

Can subsequent febrile seizures be prevented?

It is most important to know what to do, in the event of a febrile seizure re-occurring in your child.

Most parents will use fever-lowering medications such as acetaminophen and ibuprofen during a child's illness. However, these medications will only offer symptom relief and make the child feel more comfortable. Studies have shown that they do not reduce the chance of a febrile seizure.

Doctors do not recommend taking anti-seizure medications to prevent recurrence of febrile seizure as these regular medications have potential side effects. As febrile seizures are usually short-lived and harmless, anti-seizure medications will not be recommended routinely.

What should I do when my child is having a seizure?

- Keep calm.
- Loosen his or her clothing.
- Turn your child to the side to drain anything in his or her mouth to prevent choking.
- Put something flat and soft under the head if this is available.
- Move items like sharp objects or furniture away so that your child will not injure himself or herself.
- **Do not** insert your fingers or any objects in your child's mouth.
- **Do not** try to rouse your child by throwing water, slapping or shaking him or her.
- **Do not** give him or her anything to drink.
- **Do not** hold or restrain him or her in any way.
- Stay with your child until he or she is breathing normally or awake.

- Remember that your child may feel irritable and tired following a seizure. Make a special effort to be calm and reassuring afterward.
- Take note of the type and duration of the seizure as this is important.



Does my child need any long-term medications?

Anticonvulsants are rarely prescribed unless your child has other neurological problems. Your doctor will discuss this decision with you.

Other Instructions

Should I bring my child to the Urgent Care Clinic (UCC) or Children's Emergency?

Please bring your child to UCC* if he/she:

- Has a history of febrile seizures.
- Had a seizure but it has stopped and he/she has woken up.
- Has only had one seizure so far.
- Has a seizure that lasts for less than five minutes.

*UCC is a walk-in clinic in the community for children and adolescents up to 18 years old with urgent but non-life threatening conditions. It is open daily from 9am to 11pm (last registration at 9pm).



Please bring your child to the Children's Emergency immediately if he/she:

- Has his or her first episode of febrile seizure.
- Has a stiff neck.
- Becomes confused or delirious.
- Has a change in behaviour or appears persistently drowsy more than 30 minutes after the febrile seizure.
- Appears unwell.
- Has more than one seizure in a day.
- Has a seizure that lasts for more than 5 minutes continuously. Administer rectal diazepam on your child as prescribed by your doctor if it is available. Alternatively, call for an ambulance to bring your child to the nearest hospital for immediate medical treatment.

The information provided in this publication is meant purely for educational purposes and may not be used as a substitute for medical diagnosis or treatment. You should seek the advice of your doctor or a qualified healthcare provider before starting any treatment or if you have any questions related to your health, physical fitness or medical condition.

About the Khoo Teck Puat – National University Children’s Medical Institute (KTP-NUCMI)

The KTP-NUCMI is the paediatric arm of the National University Hospital and comprises the Departments of Paediatrics, Paediatric Surgery and Neonatology. We provide comprehensive and specialised medical and surgical services for newborns, children and adolescents, and are the only public hospital in Singapore that offers paediatric kidney and liver transplant programmes. Through a generous gift from the Estate of Khoo Teck Puat, we have set up an integrated outpatient facility with medical, diagnostic and rehabilitation services.

For more information about us, visit www.nuh.com.sg/ktp-nucmi.

Contact Us

24-hour Children’s Emergency

Location: NUH Main Building, Zone F, Level 1

General Enquiry: +65 6772 5000

KTP-NUCMI

Location: NUH Main Building, Zone E, Level 2

(Accessible via Kent Ridge Wing, Zone C, Level 2, Lift Lobby C)

Operating Hours: 8.30am – 5.30pm (Mon to Fri), 8.30am – 12.30pm (Sat)

General Enquiry: +65 6772 5736

Appointment Line: +65 6908 2222

Email: ktpnucmi_appt@nuhs.edu.sg

9a Viva-University Children’s Cancer Centre

Location: NUH Medical Centre, Zone B, Level 9

Operating Hours: 8am – 5.30pm (Mon to Fri)

Appointment Line: +65 6772 5030

Fax: +65 6872 4314

Email: cbccappt@nuhs.edu.sg

NUH Children’s Urgent Care Clinic @ Bukit Panjang

Location: Junction 10, 1 Woodlands Road, #01-22, Singapore 677899

Operating Hours: 9am – 11pm daily (including public holidays)

General Enquiry: +65 6219 1538

Email: childrenucc@nuhs.edu.sg

Website: www.nuh.com.sg/ucc

NUH Child Development Unit @ JMC

Location: Jurong Medical Centre,

60 Jurong West Central 3, Level 2, Singapore 648346

Operating Hours: 8.30am – 5.30pm (Mon to Fri)

Appointment Line: +65 6665 2530/2531

Fax: +65 6665 0158

Email: cdu@nuhs.edu.sg

Website: www.nuh.com.sg/cdu

NUH Child Development Unit @ Keat Hong

Location: Keat Hong Community Club,

2 Choa Chu Kang Loop, #03-01, Singapore 689687

Operating Hours: 8.30am – 5.30pm (Mon to Fri)

Appointment Line: +65 6769 4537/4637

Fax: +65 6665 0158

Email: cdu@nuhs.edu.sg

Website: www.nuh.com.sg/cdu

National University Hospital

Location: 5 Lower Kent Ridge Road, Singapore 119074

Tel: +65 6908 2222

Email: contactus@nuhs.edu.sg

Website: www.nuh.com.sg



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