

## Seizure Disorders

The do's, the don't's, and the maybe's

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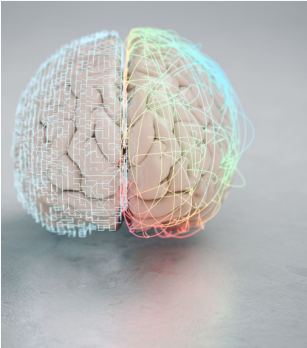
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### What Are Seizures?

A seizure is an uncontrolled burst of electrical energy in the brain



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### Classifications of seizures

- Focal seizures
  - With impaired awareness
  - Without impaired awareness
- Generalized seizures
  - Absence
  - Tonic
  - Clonic
  - Myoclonic
  - Tonic-clonic



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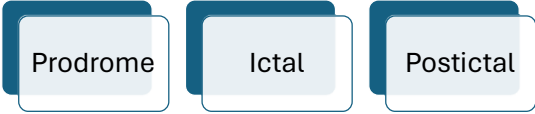
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# Seizure Stages



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## Assessment

- Type of seizure
- Typical aura (pre-seizure sensations or behaviors)
- The typical motor activity during seizures
- The post-seizure behavior and duration
- The average duration of seizures
- The current frequency of seizures
- What to do should a seizure occur at the center
- Known triggers

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## Assessment con't....

- If the medical form indicates a history of seizures, determine how long it has been since the last seizure. The longer it has been since a seizure occurred, the less likely it will recur, but it can.
- Consult with the participant's MD to determine the likelihood of seizure recurrence, particularly if the seizure activity was of the 'atonic' or 'drop' kind.

From PATH Int'l Standards 2021

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# Precautions



If the motor activity, change in postural tone, loss of motor control or alteration in consciousness is minor and is unlikely to frighten or injure the equine, participant or staff



Seizure medications may cause drowsiness or photosensitivity (see Medication).



Sensitivity of the equine to seizure activity



Availability of appropriate equine

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# Contraindications



Recent seizure activity accompanied by strong, uncontrollable motor activity or atonic or drop attack seizures due to their sudden and complete loss of postural muscle tone



A change of frequency or type of seizure until the condition is evaluated



Inability to manage a participant during an emergency dismount should a seizure occur

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The decision to deny a person participation must be done fairly and consistently

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## Center's Written Policy

1. The services the center provides
2. Qualifications of the staff, both human and equine
3. Written admissions criteria

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## Teaching Considerations

- Staff
- Volunteers
- Horse
- Age/ size of rider
- Type of seizure

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## Seizure first aid

- If you can safely perform an emergency dismount
- Make sure they can breathe and clear the area
- Recovery position
- Time the seizure
- Stay with them
- Call for help if seizure lasts longer than 5 minutes
- Don't restrain them or put anything in their mouth

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**References**

- [Get Seizure Smart | Get Seizure Smart! | Features | Epilepsy | CDC](#)
- [Mayo Clinic, Seizures https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/seizure/symptoms-causes/yc-203](https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/seizure/symptoms-causes/yc-203)
- [PATH International Standards Manual 2021 \(pgs 180-182\) \(pgs 224\)](#)

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