

You have heard from the (pediatric) doctor that your child has had a febrile seizure. In this brochure you can read what that means and what you can do yourself.

What is a febrile seizure?

A febrile seizure is caused by a rapid increase in body temperature. This causes your child to have twitches in both arms and legs and has difficulty swallowing and breathing. In addition, children are often unresponsive. A febrile seizure is quite common in children, from 6 months to 6 years. An attack of seizures with fever usually lasts a few minutes to 15 minutes. Your child will probably be drowsy or not able to react properly afterwards, after an hour your child will be fine again. Many parents find it frightening to see their child like this and they worry about the consequences of febrile seizures. That is understandable, but in 95% of cases a child does not suffer any consequences. In the remaining 5% an underlying disease is sometimes found. If an underlying disease is suspected, the pediatrician will conduct further investigations.

What can you do in case of fever?

- Do not dress your child too warmly.
- Do not use blankets in case of fever; a sheet is sufficient.
- Wash your child with lukewarm water to cool him/her down.
- Let your child drink plenty of fluids.

If your child does have a febrile seizure

- Take measures as described above.
- Above all, try to remain calm.
- Lay your child on his/her side so that he/she cannot choke.
- Make sure that your child cannot fall and cannot bump or hurt himself/herself.
- Call the GP.
- If the GP cannot come, call 112.
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About 1 in 3 children will have another seizure during a subsequent period of fever. If your child regularly suffers from febrile seizures, the attending physician can prescribe medication for this or refer him/her to a specialist.

If you have any questions about this brochure, you can contact the Pediatrics department (08:30 – 16:30) on 020 – 755 6668.

In the evenings and at night, you can reach the hospital on 020 – 755 7000.

You can also contact your GP if you have any questions.