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FEBRILE CONVULSIONS



Febrile convulsions are brought on by a high fever in a young child (usually between 6 months and 5 years). Most often this fever is caused by a virus. 1 In 20 children will have a fever-related convulsion at some time in the first 5 years of life.

1. What is a convulsion?

Convulsion is a fit where a child goes very stiff and has shaking of the arms and legs. It is usually over in less than 10 minutes.

2. What should I do?

- Lay your child on his / her side.
- Call your family doctor.
- Check your child's temperature. If the temperature is up strip down and sponge down with a lukewarm sponge. Do not use cold water as this may cause the temperature to rise further.
- Give paracetamol to relieve the fever (either oral or via suppository- no more than every 6 hrs).
- Do not put anything into his / her mouth.

3. Will it happen again in the future?

In 3 out of 10 children, yes.

You will be given a supply of diazepam suppositories as you leave the hospital and if any further convulsions occur you should use one of these suppositories and call your family doctor.

Have a reliable Thermometer at home to check the temperature if off form.

4. Does it lead to epilepsy?

Very rarely.

The vast majority of children grow out of them without any ongoing problems.

5. Can they cause brain damage?

Almost never.