

What Should You Do if Your Pet Has a Seizure?

These guidelines are for pets that are already under the care of a veterinarian for a seizure disorder. If your pet is having his or her first seizure or you see something unusual, call your veterinarian immediately.

What to Do During the Seizure

- Try to stay calm and remember that your pet is not in pain.
- Make sure your pet is in a safe place, ideally on the ground or the floor, away from stairs and anything he or she could bump into.
- Time the seizure, preferably using a watch with a second hand.
- Try to make note of when your pet started to act abnormally, when the active seizure started, when the active seizure ended, when your pet became aware of his or her surroundings, and when your pet seemed to be acting normally again.
- If possible, take a video of the seizure to help your veterinarian better characterize the event.

What Not to Do

- Do not put your hands near or in your pet's mouth because he or she may bite while in the middle of an active seizure or if he or she is disoriented.
- Do not pick up, cuddle, or hold your pet during a seizure because he or she will likely be disoriented coming out of the seizure and may act aggressively.
- Do not allow children or other pets to approach your pet while he or she is having a seizure.



Treatment

Depending on your pet's condition and other medications he or she is taking, your veterinarian may recommend medications you can give at home when your pet is having a seizure. The veterinarian's instructions will include the specific medication, dosage, and circumstances under which the medication should be given.

After the Seizure

- Clean up any urine or feces your pet may have passed during the seizure.
- Write down as much as you can remember about the seizure, focusing on the date, time, length of seizure, and duration of disorientation after the seizure. In addition, describe what your pet was doing before the seizure occurred, what the seizure was like, and how your pet acted afterward.

- Follow your veterinarian's instructions regarding updates on your pet's condition. For more help tracking your pet's condition, consider downloading the Royal Veterinary College's epilepsy tracker app (RVC Pet Epilepsy Tracker), which allows you to keep a medication journal, seizure journal, important contacts, and more.

Emergency Care

Seek emergency care for your pet if he or she has an active seizure that lasts 5 minutes or if he or she has more than 2 seizures in a 24-hour period.

—Courtesy of Cyndie Courtney, DVM
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