

Seizures

***Medical Manager must be notified of any seizure activity.**

***Bringing a watch with you to camp is mandatory – you need one to time when a seizure begins and ends.**

***Seizure-prone campers must wear floatation devices in the pool and cannot swim alone.**

Types

- **Grand Mal**
 - With grand mal seizures, there is a sudden loss of consciousness – often without warning.
 - Try to catch the camper and gently lower him/her to the ground
 - Move other campers away and try to clear the immediate area of any objects that might threaten injury
 - Try to cushion the head with something soft, if possible
 - There may be large body movements, as virtually every muscle in the body is contracting
 - There could be biting of the tongue, incontinence, and/or color change of the lips and nailbeds
- **Partial Complex**
 - With partial complex seizures, there is usually some type of warning or “aura.”
 - The camper may not be aware of the environment all of a sudden, but typically no collapse or loss of consciousness
 - They may wander/walk around, as if with purpose
 - Repetitive, non-purposeful acts or “ticks” may be seen
- **Partial Simple**
 - Usually just involve rhythmic twitching of face, hand/arm, and/or leg on one side of the body

First Aid Procedures

1. Do not try to put anything in the camper’s mouth during a seizure, do not attempt to restrain the limbs, and do not try to give fluids.
2. Clear the environment of potentially harmful objects
3. If possible, ease the individual to the floor to prevent injury from falling
4. Gently turn the person to the side, or turn their head to the side, to help keep their airway clear and allow saliva to drain from the mouth
5. Be mindful of and/or remove hearing aids and glasses while turning person to the side
6. Do not try to hold their tongue
7. Put something soft under the head, if possible
8. Place pillows along bedside, if in bed
9. Loosen tight clothing, especially around their neck
10. Continue to observe the person until fully alert and check vital signs such as pulse and breathing rate periodically

Behavior Management

General Tips

- **Patience**
 - Essential for the whole camp experience, especially when campers need assistance and may not know how to effectively express it
 - Some campers may test your patience, intentionally or unintentionally, so do your best to remain professional
- **Boundary setting**
 - Saying no to an inappropriate or unnecessary camper request is sometimes best
 - Don't let a camper mistake assistance or friendliness with affection (it happens)
 - If you find a camper to be consistently testing professional boundaries, make sure to inform camp leadership and avoid being left alone with camper
- **Candidness**
 - Honesty goes a long way; if you don't have an answer or solution, don't try to bluff it (campers will often pick up on this pretty quick); be truthful and ask for help from fellow counselors or other camp staff

Tips and Strategies for...

- **Aggression**
 - Try to redirect the camper (example: offer them a drink, change the subject, ask about their arts and craft project, etc.)
 - Be solution focused – try to find an answer before situations escalate
 - Mirroring – this is a non-judgmental verbal reflection of a camper's statements or behaviors that prevent escalation (example: It sounds like you might be confused or upset about...)
 - Show empathy – acknowledge the validity of the camper's concern or complaint
 - Negotiate and see if reasonable compromise can be reached
 - If a situation does escalate and a camper becomes physically aggressive to themselves or others, do not fight back – ensure other campers are not at risk of being harmed and that any harmful items are removed from situation; find staff with walkie talkie and get camp leadership involved
- **Confusion**
 - Demonstrate calm – sudden worry or concern could distress the camper
 - Take a moment and allow camper to re-orient to the present situation by asking them short questions like, "Would you like to me to explain what we're doing?"
 - Keep instructions simple and repeat things if necessary
 - Get leadership staff involved if camper becomes increasingly distressed and/or if confusion/disorientation does not improve after short time
- **Camper disputes**
 - Step one - make sure campers are not at risk of harming one another
 - Get clarification on the disagreement from the campers
 - See if a compromise can be reached
 - Get leadership staff involved if campers become more physically aggressive or if campers refuse to reach agreement