

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 of Seizures

- **Grand Mal**
 - With grand mal seizures, there is a **sudden loss of consciousness** – often without warning.
 - Try to catch the camper and gently **lower them to the ground**
 - Move other campers away and try to **clear the immediate area** of any objects that might cause 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 will have 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. Make sure to **take note of what time** the seizure starts
2. **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.
3. **Clear the environment** of potentially harmful objects
4. If possible, ease the individual to the floor to **prevent injury from falling**
5. 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

6. Be mindful of and/or remove hearing aids and glasses while turning person to the side
7. **Do not** try to hold their tongue
8. Put something soft under the head, if possible
9. Place pillows along bedside, if in bed
10. **Loosen tight clothing**, especially around their neck
11. Continue to observe the person until they are fully alert, again taking note of what time this happens, 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 this
 - 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 a 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 environment; find a staff member with a walkie talkie and get camp leadership involved

- **Confusion**
 - If a camper becomes confused, remain **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 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** about 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