

# RM News & Notes

## Tip of the Week

### Diagnosis - Seizure

No two seizures are alike. Some consist of a brief period of conscious eye blinking that often goes unnoticed. Others are unconscious, convulsive events that tend to be frightening to watch. Because every seizure is different, first aid should be appropriately responsive, cautious and calm. Many people who see a seizure happening are scared and confused. You can help by keeping a clear head and having the right information.

#### Call 911 if:

- The person is pregnant or has diabetes.
- The seizure happened in water.
- The seizure lasts longer than 5 minutes.
- The person does not begin breathing again and return to consciousness after the seizure stops.
- Another seizure starts before the person regains consciousness.
- The person injures himself or herself during the seizure.
- This is a first seizure or you think it might be. If in doubt, check to see if the person has a medical identification card or jewelry stating that they have epilepsy or a seizure disorder.
- If you are unsure: call 911 and allow the emergency responders to assess the situation and determine if intervention is needed.

After the seizure ends, the person will probably be groggy and tired. He or she also may have a headache and be confused or embarrassed. Be patient with the person and try to help him or her find a place to rest if he or she is tired or doesn't feel well. If necessary, offer to call a taxi, a friend, or a relative to help the person get home safely.

## Columbia County Board of Commissioners Emergency & Operations Division Risk Management Department

PO Box 498  
650-B Ronald Reagan Drive  
Evans, Georgia 30809  
Fax: 706-868-3343

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Darlene M. Bartlett CRM, ARM  
Risk Manager

706-868-3363

[dbartlett@columbiacountyga.gov](mailto:dbartlett@columbiacountyga.gov)

Janice A. Matthews CPS/CAP  
Administrative Assistant

706-312-7475

[jmatthews@columbiacountyga.gov](mailto:jmatthews@columbiacountyga.gov)

Web Page

<http://www.columbiacountyga.gov/home/index.asp?page=2440>

## Message from the Risk Manager

I have a family member with a seizure disorder so I keep current on first aid procedures for this condition. However, I've recently realized that there are still a lot of "old wives tales" out there as well as other confusing information. I recently heard about a school administrator (not Columbia County) who had a seizure and a well meaning co-worker tried to give her sugar.

### **WRONG!!!**

#1 – You give sugar for a diabetic emergency, not a seizure and  
#2- Never try to give anything by mouth to a victim who is not fully conscious.

I've also discovered that many more people than you might realize have some type of seizure disorder. This is one situation that you could easily encounter and your proper intervention could make a difference in their recovery. Unfortunately, doing the wrong thing may actually cause more harm than doing nothing, so please take a few minutes and read through this newsletter to make sure you can handle the situation.

*Darlene*

## What to Do if You See Someone Having a Seizure

If you see someone having a seizure with convulsions and/or loss of consciousness, here's how you can help:

**1. Always stay with the person until the seizure is over.**

*Seizures can be unpredictable. Some may be brief and last only a few seconds while others may start with minor symptoms and get progressively worse leading to unconsciousness and a possible fall.*

**2. Stay calm; most seizures only last a few minutes.**

*If you remain calm, it may help others remain calm also. Speak calmly and reassuringly to the person during and after the seizure.*

**3. Move any nearby objects out of the way to prevent injury.**

*Move any sharp or hard objects. If you can't move surrounding objects or the person is wandering or confused, help steer them away from dangerous situations if possible.*

**4. Pay attention to the length of the seizure.**

*Time from beginning to the end of the active seizure and then how long it takes the person to return to normal activity so that you can tell a doctor or emergency personnel if necessary.*

**5. Make the person as comfortable as possible.**

*Help them sit down in a safe place. If they are at risk of falling, lay them down on the floor. If possible, support or cushion the head to keep it from hitting the floor. Loosen any tight clothing around the neck. After the active seizure has ended, roll the person onto their side to prevent choking on any fluids or vomit.*

**6. Keep onlookers away.**

*Encourage people to step back and give the person some room. Waking up to a crowd can be embarrassing or confusing.*

**7. Do not hold the person down.**

*Restraining can lead to injuries and make the person more confused, agitated or aggressive. If the person tries to walk around, try to let them walk in a safe, enclosed area.*

**8. Do not put anything in the person's mouth.**

*Jaw and face muscles may tighten during a seizure, causing the person to bite down. If something is in the mouth, the person may break and swallow the object or break their teeth. And No: a person cannot swallow their tongue.*

**9. Do not give the person water, pills or food until they are fully alert.**

*If the person is not fully awake or aware, they could swallow incorrectly and it could go into their lungs instead of the stomach.*

**10. If the seizure continues for longer than five minutes, call 911.**

*See other guidelines on front page.*

**11. Be sensitive and supportive and ask others to do the same.**

*Seizures can be frightening for the person having one, as well as for others. People may feel embarrassed or confused about what happened. Remember that it is not unusual for a person to vomit or lose control of their bladder during a seizure. Keep this in mind as the person wakes up. Reassure the person that they are safe. Once they are alert and able to communicate, tell them what happened in very simple terms. Offer to stay with the person until they are ready to go back to normal activity or call someone to stay with them.*

**Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) is rarely required after a generalized seizure. In most cases, the person who has had a seizure returns to normal within minutes.**

## Up Coming Events

Each program is advertised by Risk Management and is available to employees of Columbia County Board of Commissioners and the city employees of Grovetown and Harlem. Additionally, the Defensive Driving Courses may be attended by immediate family members of employees, on a space available basis, for a nominal fee.

**Pre-registration is required.**

For additional information or to register contact Risk Management. 706-312-7475

**Safety Review Board      January 8, 2009**

**Defensive Driving  
Course – 8 hour              November 13, 2008  
January 6, 2009  
January 29, 2009**

**Defensive Driving  
Course – 4 hour**

**CPR/AED/First Aid**

**County Office Closed      November 11, 2008  
November 27-28, 2008  
December 24-25, 2008  
January 1, 2009  
January 19, 2009**

### NOVEMBER 2008

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### JANUARY 2009

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## Happy Thanksgiving



## Newsy Notes

