

COMMON TYPES OF SEIZURES

- **PARTIAL (FOCAL, LOCAL) SEIZURES** - Child appears to 'blank out' or not to be present. These seizures do not involve the whole brain.
- **SIMPLE PARTIAL SEIZURES** – most common, generally non-convulsive seizures that do **not** involve the whole brain, but are more obvious than 'focal' type seizures.
 - With motor signs (jerking/twitching)
 - With involuntary (autonomic) signs and symptoms (e.g. drooling, voiding)
 - With sensory symptoms (somatosensory or special sensory symptoms) e.g. visual (e.g. aura's, colours), auditory (noises) signs/symptoms
 - With psychic/psychotic symptoms e.g. 'hearing voices', hallucinating etc.
 - No loss of awareness/consciousness
- **COMPLEX PARTIAL SEIZURES** (with impairment of consciousness)
 - Can have impairment of consciousness at onset OR
 - Simple partial onset followed by impairment of consciousness
 - Aura or warning may be present
 - May begin with a 'stare'
 - Usually one or more involuntary movements (e.g. twitching)
- **GENERALIZED SEIZURES** (convulsive or non-convulsive) involve the **whole** brain.
 - **Absence seizures** - Marked by a momentary break in the stream of thought and activity. Most common in children.
 - **Atypical absences** – non-predictable or irregular presentation of symptoms
 - **Myoclonic seizures** – intermittent or continuous movement of a muscle, muscle group or whole body.
 - **Tonic seizures** – Continuous tension in the muscle/muscle group, often a loss of consciousness, generally begins with a sudden cry and muscle rigidity, followed by muscle 'jerks'. Often associated with loss of bowel/bladder control and shallow breathing.
 - **Tonic-clonic seizures** – muscle spasm, alternating between continuous tension and contraction and relaxation of the muscle group, with similar symptoms e.g. breathing, loss of bowel/bladder control etc., as with tonic seizures.
 - **Atonic seizures** – lack of normal muscle tone, characterized by sudden collapse or fall; or, conversely a stiffening of the whole body, torso or limbs.
- **UNCLASSIFIED EPILEPTIC SEIZURES**
Children/individuals with multiple disabilities are often unable to fully describe the sensations and experiences associated with seizures. As a result, it is sometimes difficult to make appropriate diagnoses of seizures in this group of individuals.