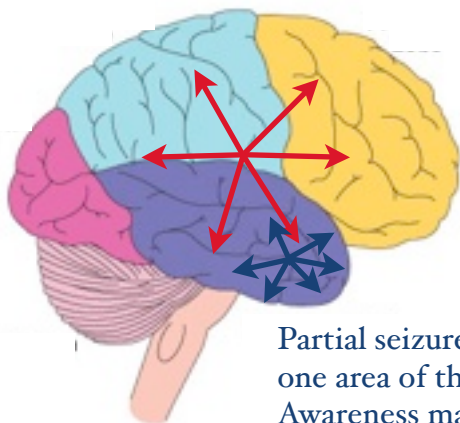


SEIZURES

Generalised seizures affect the whole brain. The patient loses consciousness



Partial seizures stay in one area of the brain. Awareness may be altered or normal

Immediately after a seizure a person will be very drowsy. They will usually return to a normal over 30 to 60 minutes. This is called being “postictal”. During this time the patient should be observed closely, with 5 minutely vital signs, to detect airway compromise or a recurrent seizure.

If a person with known epilepsy soon returns to normal, they may decide not to go to hospital. Respect their wishes, but make sure they go home with a responsible adult and followup with their usual doctor.

Scenario

You are called to the ingot mill where an operator has collapsed to the floor. He was observed by colleagues to have jerky movements of his limbs but this has stopped. After a recent visit to his neurologist, he has stopped taking medication. He is breathing but not responsive.

Task

Some of you will be asked to tackle a similar practice scenario this month.

Discuss your approach with your colleagues before then.

Question

What is status epilepticus?



Step-by-step

- ★ Place in a lateral position to open airway.
 - ★ Provide a protective environment. Remove dangers rather than restraining patient.
 - ★ Give oxygen 8 litres per minute via mask.
 - ★ Gently suction mouth if secretions impair the airway
 - ★ Check blood sugar. If below 4 mmol/litre, give 25 ml of intravenous 50 % Dextrose.
- If a seizure lasts longer than five minutes or there are multiple seizures**
- ★ Call 000 or your emergency number
 - ★ Give intramuscular midazolam, if able
 - If under 60 years old give 0.1 mg/kg
 - If over 60 years old give 0.05 mg/kg
 - Maximum single dose 10 mg
 - ★ Consider nasopharyngeal airway or bag-mask ventilation if airway or breathing inadequate.