Seizure - First Aid

When encountering someone having a seizure many people feel ill-equipped handle this circumstance. The most important tool is common sense. The following tips are simple, common-sense steps to take when responding to a person having a seizure.

- Stay calm.
- Prevent injury. During the seizure, you can exercise your common sense by insuring there is nothing within reach that could harm the person if he / she struck it.
- Pay attention to the length of the seizure.
- Make the person as comfortable as possible.
- Keep onlookers away.
- Do not hold the person down. If the person having a seizure thrashes around there is no need for you to restrain them. Remember to consider your safety as well.
- Do not put anything in the person's mouth. Contrary to popular belief, a person having a seizure is incapable of swallowing his or her tongue so you can breathe easy in the knowledge that you do not have to stick your fingers into the mouth of someone in this condition.
- Do not give the person water, pills, or food until fully alert.
- If the situation is severe and you need to call emergency personnel
  a. Call 6911 from a campus phone or 968-6911 from a cell phone, if you are on the home campus
  b. Call 911 if you are on any other campus
- Be sensitive and supportive, and ask others to do the same.

Many seizure types - such as generalized absence seizures or complex partial seizures, which involve relatively brief episodes of unresponsiveness - don’t require any specific first-aid measures.

To watch a video describing the steps to take for someone having a seizure, use the following link: http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=vO7MRs-EKJQ

After the seizure, the person should be placed on his / her left side. Keep in mind there is a small risk of post-seizure vomiting, before the person is fully alert. Therefore, the person’s head should be turned so that any vomit will drain out of the mouth without being inhaled. Stay with the person until he / she recovers (5 to 20 minutes).

Use the following link to access a video describing how to effectively help after someone has had a seizure: http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=a9SU3G0HcxA

For more info: http://www.epilepsy.com/epilepsy/firstaid