



## Different Stages of a Convulsion Seizure

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### DESCRIPTION

An electrical disturbance that disrupts regular brain activity is known as a seizure. It happens when abnormal brain electric signals cause changes in how the body functions. Depending on the type of seizures a person experiences and the specific form of epilepsy they have, the way a seizure manifests itself can differ greatly between epileptics.

The way your nerve cells communicate with one another is affected by chemical changes in your body, which lead to seizures. Your brain experiences an abrupt electrical surge as a result, which may last a few seconds or several minutes. Seizures come in a variety of forms, but they frequently have the same pattern.

Understanding these phases may make you feel more prepared when a seizure occurs if you, a loved one, or someone you know has epilepsy or experiences seizures for another reason.

Understanding the four distinct phases of a seizure is useful for gaining a better understanding of what is happening in the brain when one occurs. You can read more about each phase on this page, including what makes them unique, when they might happen, and typical symptoms that someone with epilepsy might encounter.

The four phases of seizure are:

- Prodromal
- Early ictal
- Ictal
- Postictal

A subjective emotion or sensation known as the prodromal phase can start hours or even days before the actual seizure. Prodromal is the medical term for the time between the onset of early symptoms and the onset of more pronounced, diagnosable symptoms. Confusion, anxiety, irritability, headache, tremor, anger, or other mood disturbances are among a prodrome's most typical symptoms.

This stage, which is experienced by about 20% of people with epilepsy<sup>3</sup>, may act as a precursor to the onset of a seizure for those who experience it. The prodromal phase may even be empowering for those going through it because they may be warned of an impending seizure.

An aura is frequently the first indication of seizure activity in people with epilepsy. An aura is the first indication of seizure activity and the start of the ictal phase, despite the fact that it has traditionally been thought of as a warning of an impending seizure.

The interval between the start of the seizure and its conclusion is known as the ictal phase.

### Prodrome

Some epileptics claim to be able to predict when a seizure will occur. They might catch a "Prodrome" or pre-symptom, a few hours or even days before one begins.

Common Prodrome symptoms include:

- Changes in mood
- Trouble sleeping
- Anxiety
- Problems staying focused
- Feeling lightheaded

Prodrome signs appear to be more common in people who experience tonic-clonic seizures, also known as grand mal seizures. Both sides of your brain are affected by these seizures, which result in convulsions and loss of consciousness.

### Aura

This stage occurs just before a seizure begins and serves as an early warning sign. The symptoms may only last a few seconds and appear suddenly. Having an aura may result in:

- Vision problems
- Odd smells, sounds, or tastes
- Dizziness

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- Headache
- Nausea
- Panic
- Feelings of intense fear

If you notice an aura, try to find a safe location before the seizure starts. A partial seizure is what you have if you experience an aura but not the other phases of a seizure.

There are some people who have no aura at all. The subsequent, or "middle," stage is when their seizures begin.

### Middle (Ictal)

When you think of a seizure, this is probably the stage that comes to mind. Your brain undergoes significant electrical changes during it.

Some of your symptoms, such as feeling a gust of wind even though you're inside, a sensation in your body, or hearing a buzzing in your ears, won't be noticed by others. However, you might exhibit physical symptoms that others can see.

Some common signs of this stage are:

- Loss of awareness (blacking out)
- Feeling confused
- Memory lapse
- Trouble hearing
- Odd smells or tastes
- Seeing flashing lights
- Trouble speaking
- Drooling

- Loss of muscle control
- Twitching
- Body convulsions
- Trouble breathing
- Racing heart

### Ending (Postictal)

Your brain is trying to return to normal at this point after the seizure. Your body starts to unwind. The seizure's physical aftereffects also started to manifest.

The kind of seizure you had and the regions of your brain that were affected will determine how long this phase lasts. Some people experience improvement very quickly. Some people may not feel like themselves again for several hours.

It's common to have:

- Fatigue
- Headache
- Loss of bladder control
- Loss of bowel control
- Lack of consciousness
- Confusion
- Fear and anxiety
- Trouble walking or writing
- Thirst
- Upset stomach
- Weakness in parts of your body
- Sore muscles