



**MACEDON  
VETERINARY  
CARE**

**Partners in Pet Care**



## SEIZURES

Witnessing a pet having a seizure can be a very frightening experience. Seizures or convulsions in pets can range from momentary loss of consciousness to severe, violent seizures. With a severe or violent seizure a pet will fall over on its side, paddle ferociously with its legs, stiffen and lose control of bowels and bladder. These seizures can last anywhere from fifteen seconds to several minutes. Seizures are usually followed by a postictal period during which the animal is very quiet, lays in position, breathes rapidly or pants, and gradually returns to normal.

A short seizure followed by a brief postictal period, after which the pet returns to normal is not a serious emergency. However, you should notify your veterinarian and follow the suggestions he/she recommends. A seizure becomes an emergency if the pet has cluster seizures (one seizure right after another) for a prolonged period of time (status epilepticus). A pet can die or suffer permanent brain damage from prolonged seizures.

There is little an owner can do when the animal is suffering a seizure. Remaining calm and preventing further injury during the seizure by following these suggestions is the best you can do.

- ❖ Clear away from the area any heavy objects that can be knocked over onto the seizing pet.
- ❖ Do not be afraid to move the pet from an area where it can roll off and receive additional injuries i.e. the couch or deck (if outside)
- ❖ Never poke fingers in or around the mouth of a pet having a seizure: pets do not swallow their tongue and you could get severely bitten.

Seizures are most commonly caused by idiopathic epilepsy which may be hereditary. Seizures of this type usually begin between the age of six months and three years. Seizures may also be caused by hypoglycemia (low blood sugar), canine distemper virus and poisonous materials such as lead poisoning, inorganic phosphate poisoning, or inappropriate use of flea products on pets. Some tumors have been known to cause seizures and in order to rule out a tumor as the cause your pet would require blood work. Any seizure should be reported to your veterinarian and prolonged or repeated seizures should be considered an emergency.

Please contact Macedon Veterinary Care at 315-986-4246 with questions or concerns.

