

## Epilepsy – How to deal with it



If your pet has a seizure, stay calm!

They will be unconscious and neither in distress nor in pain. While a fit lasts, do not touch them and certainly do not try to force anything into their mouth as you will get bitten. They cannot swallow their tongue and if they bite their tongue it will look horrible but it will heal. Instead, remove anything lying around nearby that might cause injury. Gently move them by using a blanket if they are in a dangerous place such as at the top of the stairs. Turn off radios and TV's and keep their surroundings as dark and as quiet as possible.

Ideally we should examine your pet after a fit. It is important that your pet is examined to rule out the more common causes of seizures, such as infectious diseases, liver problems, trauma and tumours. If the fit has lasted for only a few minutes it is better to keep your pet quiet for a while before bringing them into the surgery, so as not to stress them out. If a fit lasts more than five minutes or there are repeated fits then telephone us and ask to be seen immediately. The Vet may decide to take a blood sample, X-rays and scan your pet, and may decide to refer them for specialist imaging such as MRI scan or to refer them to a specialist neurologist. Alternatively we may decide to simply treat them to make another fit less likely.

Treatment is often started after the second seizure. Unfortunately treatment comes with side-effects, it involves giving tablets every day and it is often life-long. Regular blood samples are needed to check drug levels. Unfortunately, the tablets can take a few weeks to work and for that time, the character of your Pet can change. But they often return to their former selves after a few weeks and can live a more normal life. Unfortunately, the treatment only reduces the likelihood of another seizure and as the cause is not treated, the drugs do not exclude it from happening again.

*“Epilepsy happens. It can be dealt with. It is unlikely that your pet will be cured but most will continue to have seizures if left untreated. The careful use of medication will reduce the frequency of seizures and your pet will be able to lead a healthy and happy life. Your pet will not be worrying about when their next seizure is going to happen and neither should you.”*

The website <http://www.canineepilepsy.co.uk> is a fantastic source of information.

01793 522483