

Seizures in Dogs

The causes and treatments of a dog's seizure.

CAUSES OF SEIZURES IN DOGS

Congenital/Inherited disorders: Idiopathic epilepsy (in Labrador Retrievers, Golden Retrievers, German Shepherd Dogs, Beagles, Cavalier King Charles Spaniels, Springer Spaniels, and other breeds); hepatic encephalopathy (due to abnormality of the blood vessels in the liver; in Miniature Schnauzers, Yorkshire Terriers, Cairn Terriers, Old English Sheepdogs, and other breeds); primary hyperlipidemia (increased lipids, such as cholesterol and triglycerides, in the bloodstream; in Miniature Schnauzers); lissencephaly (rare cerebral abnormality in Lhasa Apsos; also occurs in Irish Setters, Wirehaired Fox Terriers, and Samoyeds with cerebellar hypoplasia), or Pug encephalitis (also occurs in Yorkshire Terriers and Maltese).

Toxicity: Ethylene glycol (antifreeze), bromethalin (rodenticide), strychnine (rodenticide), sodium monofluoroacetate (1080, rodenticide), metaldehyde (slug bait), bread dough, lead, vitamin A, toad poisoning, carbamate insecticides, or organophosphate insecticides.

Infectious diseases: Distemper, rabies, infectious canine hepatitis (rare), or other bacterial, viral, or fungal diseases that cause meningitis or encephalitis. Note: Never handle a dog who may have rabies. If possible, without touching the dog, confine him in a room, pen, or yard and call your local animal control for assistance.

Tumors: In brain, nasal passages and/or sinuses (with extension into brain), pituitary, pancreas, or liver.

Drug reactions: Chlorpheniramine (antihistamine; large amounts), ibuprofen, aspirin, or mitotane, a medication used to treat hyperadrenocorticism (Cushing's disease) or adrenal tumors.

Miscellaneous: Secondary hyperlipidemia (increased lipids, such as cholesterol and triglycerides, in the bloodstream) due to pancreatitis, liver disease, or kidney disease.

Nutritional: Hypoglycemia, puerperal hypocalcemia (decreased blood calcium level during lactation), vitamin D deficiency, or secondary hyperlipidemia due to high-fat meal.

Parasites/Parasite-borne diseases: Borreliosis (Lyme disease).

Endocrine disorders: Hypoparathyroidism or secondary hyperlipidemia due to hypothyroidism, diabetes mellitus, or hyperadrenocorticism (Cushing's disease).

Allergies/Hypersensitivities: Anaphylaxis.

What to do: Use a blanket or pillows (not your hands) to keep the dog away from stairs and other potentially harmful areas or objects. A seizure may or may not be an emergency, depending on the cause, duration, and whether it recurs. Contact your veterinarian or emergency clinic immediately for specific advice about your dog's condition.

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