

Convulsion can be terrifying

Dear Dr. Cash:

I had the scare of my life recently. While my baby was recovering from the flu, she became feverish and then she had a convulsion. Her doctor said it was probably caused by the fever. Could there be a more serious problem which caused the convulsion?

D.V., Southfield



By
DR. RALPH
CASH

One of the most terrifying experiences parents can have is watching their child have a seizure. The younger the child and the more rapidly the temperature shoots up, the greater the chance of a seizure.

While this may be caused by fever alone, it is essential to rule out other causes, especially the first time it happens. The child must be evaluated by a physician. Sometimes it is necessary to have a spinal tap where a few drops of spinal fluid are removed to be sure there is no underlying infection such as meningitis. While this may sound frightening, the procedure is really quite safe and simple in experienced hands.

Despite their frightening appearance, convulsions are generally harmless. When properly controlled, they do not lead to brain damage or other permanent side effects. Usually the seizures are brief, lasting only a few minutes, but they can last up to 15-20 minutes.

When a seizure occurs, call your doctor immediately. Remember to:

- Be sure the airway is clear. A blocked windpipe is a danger during a seizure. Turn the child on his or her side or stomach to prevent swallowing the tongue. If the child's color is fine, the tongue is probably clear.
- Lower the child's temperature immediately by giving tepid (not ice cold) sponge baths. Use a fan, if possible. But do not try to force aspirin into a convulsing child.

In some families there is a history of fever convulsions. Some children have recurrent seizures when they get high fevers. In such cases, many physicians recommend long-term preventative use of a barbiturate until the problem is outgrown, usually within a few years.

County aims to aid families

Are you willing to donate time to a program designed to help young families obtain information that will help them improve the quality of their family life?

Oakland County is looking for volunteers to go into homes and neighborhoods and talk to small groups about the HOME activity kits. They are designed for parents of pre-school children. Each kit helps to prepare a program on subjects like child development and family relationships, food and nutrition and family resource management.

The kits are available through the Oakland County Cooperative Extension Service. Once a group understands the leader outline and the procedure for using the kits, it can then operate independently, thus allowing the volunteer to assist other groups.

Interested volunteers attend a short orientation to familiarize themselves with the material. It takes place in the extension office, 1200 N. Telegraph, Pontiac. For information call the office at 558-0855.

Day camp will view nutrition

The Expanded Nutrition Program and 4-H Youth Program of the Oakland County Cooperative Extension Service will sponsor a day camp for children ages 7-11 at Camp Agawam, Lake Orion, Aug. 21-25.

This camp is designed for children in the nutrition program and also is open to the public. Two sessions are planned, Aug. 21-22, and Aug. 23-24. Aug. 23 is an optional day for a short session. Buses will be available for those children without transportation. The fee is \$2 daily per child.

For registration information call the Oakland County Cooperative Extension Service, 558-0857.

Teaching alternative in workshop

The Continuum Center for Adult Counseling and Leadership Training at Oakland University in Rochester, is offering a one-day workshop for teachers who are anticipating career changes. The session will meet from 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., Tuesday, Aug. 15 at Souffier, Northland Inn, Southfield.

The program, "Alternative Career Options for Teachers," is designed to acquaint teachers with some of the alternatives, including social and financial, that are part of a career change.

Information will be provided through speakers from business, job placement and educational settings. Job placement is not provided. The fee which includes lunch is \$20.



Quads reach a milestone

Dr. Enrique Ostrea of Southfield, chief of pediatrics at Hutzel Hospital, and Dr. Frederico Mariona, chief of human parturition, joined in the celebration as the Hollidge quadruplets marked their first birthday recently. Dr. Mariona was the obstetrician who delivered the children of Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Hollidge of Grosse Pointe, on July 24, 1977. From left are Sara Anderson, Dr. Mariona, Dr. Ostrea and Barbara Bradley, holding Heather, Beth, Kenneth and Dawn, but not necessarily in that order.

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