

SHEFFIELD CHILDREN'S NHS FOUNDATION TRUST

GIVING RECTAL DIAZEPAM – ADVICE FOR PARENTS/CARERS

Why has rectal Diazepam been prescribed?

Most seizures in children stop within 5 or 10 minutes but occasionally they go on for longer. If a single seizure or group of seizures lasts for 30 minutes or more it is called **status epilepticus**. Occasionally very prolonged seizures (over 1 to 2 hours) may be damaging to a child. To try and prevent prolonged seizures rectal Diazepam has been prescribed for use at home and where appropriate at school.

When should rectal Diazepam be given?

Rectal Diazepam is usually given five to ten minutes after the start of the seizure. The precise dose and timing will be decided by the doctor. **You will be given an individual protocol to follow for your child** - please time any seizures rather than guess so that you know when to use the Rectal Diazepam.

Rectal Diazepam is for use as a first aid measure only. Our general advice is that you should allow six / eight hours between each use of Rectal Diazepam.

How do I know when the seizure has stopped?

Following a seizure a child will normally become relaxed and sleepy. He or she may be able to respond to you though they may well appear confused. If your child is still stiff or twitchy even though the bigger movements have stopped the seizure may still be continuing.

How do I know I am giving the correct dose of rectal Diazepam?

The rectal Diazepam will come in a small tube with the dose clearly marked on it. The correct dose to use will also be clearly written on the child's protocol.

How do I give rectal Diazepam?

Take the tube out of the foil and either remove the safety cap or break the seal at the top (depending on brand supplied).

Place the child on their side.

Insert the nozzle into the anus (bottom) up to the first mark if under three years of age, or up to the hilt if over three years of age.

Squeeze the contents of the tube into the child's bottom and keep squeezing whilst withdrawing the tube.

Hold the child's buttocks together for a few moments.

If the child has their bowels open after you have given the Diazepam do not give more Diazepam straight away, as it will be difficult to know how much has already been absorbed. Call an ambulance and explain what has happened.

Does the rectal Diazepam work straightaway?

No - it will take between five and eight minutes to work because it has to be absorbed into the bloodstream.

Do I still need to call an ambulance?

We would advise you to call an ambulance as well as giving rectal Diazepam in any one of the following circumstances:

- if it is the first time the child has ever used rectal diazepam
- if the seizure has not stopped 10 minutes after using rectal Diazepam
- if you think the child may have suffered a head injury during the seizure
- if the child appears to be having trouble breathing

Can I give a second dose of rectal Diazepam if the first dose does not work?

The child's protocol for use of rectal Diazepam may allow you to give a second dose of Diazepam. If the child has received two doses of Diazepam you should call an ambulance in order that the child can be seen in hospital.

Are there any side effects?

Rectal Diazepam may slow down a child's breathing; if the child has a **severe chest infection** or other breathing problems an ambulance should be called at the same time as giving rectal Diazepam. Rectal Diazepam can make a child sleepy.

Where should I keep the rectal Diazepam?

Rectal Diazepam should be stored at room temperature and out of the reach of children. Check the expiry date before using.

What do I do if I would like further information?

For further advice contact the Epilepsy Nurses at The Ryegate Children's Centre Telephone 0114 271 7621 or 0114 271 7620

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For Further advice contact:



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