

# The Fatal Five in ID/A

There are five major health issues identified in people with intellectual disability/autism (ID/A) that lead to serious illness, infections and sometimes death. They are called the **Fatal Five: choking/aspiration, constipation, dehydration, seizures, and infection.**



Choking



Constipation



Dehydration



Seizure



Infection

**Seizures can be life threatening if the person stops breathing, has an irregular heartbeat during a seizure, or sustains a severe injury.**

## Be Proactive to Prevent Seizures

- Administer medications as prescribed
- Avoid triggers that cause seizures
- Discuss seizure record with physician

## Call 911

- If it is the person's first seizure
- If the person is not breathing
- If seizures continue one after another without the person regaining consciousness
- If the seizure occurs in water
- If the seizure lasts over 5 minutes
- If bodily injury occurred during seizure, especially head injury

## Symptoms of Seizures

### Mild Symptoms

- Staring; eye roll or flutter
- Unresponsive
- Confused
- Twitching of face
- Lip smacking
- Numbness, tingling in body

### What to do During a Seizure

- Ensure safe surroundings.
- Loosen clothing, jewelry around neck.
- Remove glasses and hard, sharp objects.
- Turn person on side.
- Look at clock/watch to time length of seizure.
- Provide padding under person's head.
- Stay with the person.
- Check for breathing throughout the seizure.

### Intense Symptoms

- Loss of consciousness
- Brief muscle jerks and spasms
- Loss of bladder or bowel control
- Limp, collapsed on floor
- Rigid muscle tone and jerking
- Change in breathing pattern

### What NOT to do During a Seizure

- Do not put anything in person's mouth—a person cannot swallow their tongue.
- Do not restrain or hold the person down - a seizure cannot be stopped.
- Do not give the person anything to eat or drink until fully awake—this could cause choking/aspiration.
- Do not attempt artificial respiration unless the person is not breathing.