

the recovery position

epilepsy
society

factsheet

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The recovery position can help someone recover after a tonic clonic seizure. These steps should be followed once the shaking has stopped.



1. Kneel on the floor to one side of the person.



2. Place the person's arm that is nearest to you at a right angle to their body, so that it is bent at the elbow with the hand pointing upwards. This will keep it out of the way when you roll them over.



3. Gently pick up their other hand with your palm against theirs (palm to palm). Turn any rings inward to avoid scratching their face. Now place the back of their hand onto their opposite cheek (for example, against their left cheek if it is their right hand). Keep your hand there to guide and support their head as you roll them over.



4. Use your other arm to reach across to the person's knee that is furthest from you, and pull it up so that their leg is bent and their foot is flat on the floor.

See next page for steps 5 to 7.



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5. Gently pull their knee towards you so that they roll over onto their side, facing you. Their body weight should help them to roll over quite easily.



6. Move their bent leg that is nearest to you, in front of their body so that it is resting on the floor. This position will help to balance them.



7. Gently raise their chin to tilt their head back slightly, as this will open up their airway and help them to breathe. Check that nothing is blocking their airway. If there is an obstruction, such as food in their mouth, remove this if you can do so safely. Stay with them, giving reassurance, until they have fully recovered.



Call for an ambulance if:

- it is the person's first seizure;
- they have injured themselves badly;
- they have trouble breathing after the seizure has stopped;
- one seizure immediately follows another with no recovery in between;
- the seizure lasts **2 minutes longer** than is usual for them; or
- the seizure lasts for **more than 5 minutes** and you don't know how long their seizures usually last.

 Visit [epilepsysociety.org.uk/recovery-position-video](https://www.epilepsysociety.org.uk/recovery-position-video) for our video of how to put someone into the recovery position.

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[epilepsysociety.org.uk](https://www.epilepsysociety.org.uk)



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01494 601 400

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