

[Focal onset impaired awareness \(complex partial\) seizures](#) sometimes resemble either daydreaming or generalized non motor (absence) seizures. Review the following questions to learn some of the differences. Then discuss the answers with your health care provider to determine the appropriate next steps.

Questions to Ask	When It's Daydreaming	When It's a Seizure
How frequent are the episodes?	Not frequent. <i>They can be alerted out of daydreaming, but not out of a seizure.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Focal onset impaired awareness:</i> Rarely more than several times per day or week • <i>Generalized onset non motor:</i> Could be many times per day
In what situations do they occur?	Boring situation	Any time, including during physical activity
Do they begin abruptly?	No	Usually yes. Some focal onset impaired awareness seizures begin slowly with a warning.
Can they be interrupted?	Yes	No
How long do they last?	Until something interesting happens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Focal onset impaired awareness:</i> Up to several minutes • <i>Generalized onset non motor:</i> Rarely more than 15-20 seconds
Does the person do anything during the episode?	Probably just stares	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Focal onset impaired awareness:</i> Automatism are common • <i>Generalized onset non motor:</i> Just stares
What is the person like immediately after the episode?	Alert	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Focal onset impaired awareness:</i> Confused • <i>Generalized onset non motor:</i> Alert

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