

- If there is a specific time pattern when seizures happen, it would be advisable not to have showers or baths around this time.
- Bathroom doors that are outward opening provide easier access if your child should have a seizure in the bathroom.

Sleeping

- If your child has seizures at night the use of a special seizure pillow is advisable. (Available from Brainwave).
- Ensure that there is a tight fitting sheet on the bed / cot. In the case of an infant ensure that they are placed on their back at the foot of the bed.

General Advice

- Identity bracelets or cards are available from suppliers of medical identity jewellery.
- These are safety suggestions only, and it is important to remember that only some may be necessary for your child. Safety measures should be adhered to accordingly.

Resources

Brainwave provides support, information and advice to people with epilepsy.

Address: 249 Crumlin Road

Crumlin

Dublin 12

Telephone: 01-455 7500

Remember: Ask your nurse if you are unsure about anything


Additional Instructions:

Developed by Maria Dempsey,
CNS Neurology.

Date issued: June 2007

Reviewed: April 2012

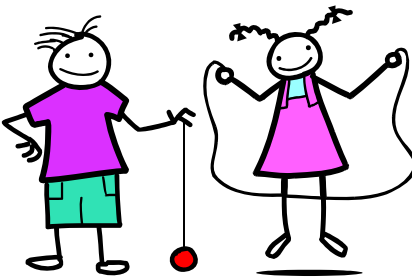
©2012 Our Lady's Children Hospital, Crumlin, Dublin 12. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means without the prior written permission of the copyright holder. Our Lady's Children Hospital makes no representation, express or implied, with regard to the accuracy of the information contained in this publication and cannot accept any legal responsibility for any errors or omissions that may be made.



Our Lady's
Children's Hospital,
Crumlin

**Our Lady's Children's
Hospital, Crumlin,
Dublin 12**

...where children's health comes first



Safety for Children with Epilepsy

**The Children's Neurosciences
Centre**

Tel: (01) 4096100

Ext 6581

This leaflet has been designed with the aim of allowing children with epilepsy to enjoy the activities involved with being a child. The leaflet will provide you with some information about the safety precautions to be considered for children with epilepsy. Some or all of these precautions may apply to your child.

- **Type of seizure** – Seizures with a higher risk of injury include prolonged seizures, tonic clonic, tonic and drop attacks (atonic). There is a higher risk of injury to children when there is a sudden loss of consciousness or awareness.
- **Age** – Children and infants are more susceptible to injuries or accidents.

Specific Activities – Parents and children should consider the consequences of a seizure and the possible risk of injury prior to partaking in an activity. It would be important to have a responsible adult present whenever your child is partaking in any such activity, such as swimming, cycling or other adventurous sports.

- **Know your child's seizure triggers** – Some children know that certain things can trigger a seizure, such as not enough sleep, stress, heat, alcohol, and in some exceptional cases flashing lights.

Common injuries and accidents are:

- Cuts, abrasions and bruising.
- Burns.
- Broken bones and teeth / falls.
- Accidental overdose of anti-epileptic medication.

Less common accidents can occur while:

- Swimming
- Sleeping

Suggested preventative measures

These can reduce the risk of your child sustaining an injury, but may not prevent injury from occurring in all cases.

Cuts, abrasions and bruising.

- At home reduce the amount of clutter, protect sharp or jutting corners or edges.
- Use a shower curtain rather than a glass screen to improve accessibility in the event of a seizure and to reduce the risk of serious injury.
- When loading your dishwasher ensure that all sharp objects are pointing downwards.
- Use shatter proof crockery and cordless electrical appliances that have an automatic switch off.
- Supervision is very important at all times especially if your child is performing any tasks that involve the last two points.

Burns

- Avoid light weight and free standing heaters. It would be advisable to place fixed safety guards around the fireplace.
- Use a safety guard around the oven.
- Caution should be exercised in using electrical equipment e.g. hair straighteners etc.
- If your child is serving hot food or meals ensure they are supervised at all times.
- When filling a bath it is advisable to start and finish filling it with cold water.

Falls

- Avoid high risk activities such as rock climbing without the use of the necessary safety equipment. Also the relevant people should be informed of the possibility of seizures.
- A helmet should be worn when cycling, rollerblading, skateboarding or horse riding.

- Avoid sleeping on the top bunk a low bed is preferable.
- When waiting for a bus or train ensure that your child stands back from the road or platform.

Accidental Overdose of anti-epileptic medication

- All medications should be locked away in a cool dry place out of the reach of children.
- Check with your doctor or Neurology nurse specialist what to do in the event of a missed dose.
- Prior to taking any other additional medication always inform the pharmacist of what anti-epileptic your child is currently taking and discuss possible side effects. Always inform your doctor of any medication changes that you make.
- Always inform your doctor of any medication changes that you make.

Water Safety

- Encourage your child to take showers instead of baths.
- Ensure that they are supervised at all times.
- Bath taps should be turned off prior to your child having a bath.
- To provide extra safety within the bathroom the use of rubber backed mats is strongly advised.
- Never allow your child to swim alone. Always ensure that there is a competent capable adult swimmer present.
- If your child has had brain surgery, always check with your doctor before diving.
- Inform the lifeguards on duty that your child has epilepsy.
- Wear the appropriate life jacket when taking part in water activities, such as boating.