

SAFETY ADVICE FOR CHILDREN WITH EPILEPSY

Participation in activities

It is very important for all children with epilepsy to live as full and active lives as possible *both at home and at school*. Participation in most sport and leisure activities is fine as long as some sensible precautions are taken (e.g. wearing a helmet and avoiding busy roads when cycling).



Water Risk



The greatest risk for children with epilepsy is related to water. Swimming is safe, *but only as long* as it is directly supervised at all times by someone who can intervene in the case of a seizure.

For the same reason it is best to have showers instead of baths (unless directly supervised) and not to lock the bathroom door.

Heights

It is best to avoid climbing above the child's own height to avoid the risk of fall and injury (unless wearing a harness or directly supervised). Leaning over balconies or other similar great heights is also not advised.



Heat sources



Children with epilepsy should take care to reduce the risk of burns. It is best to put a hot cup on a solid flat surface between sips and to keep distance from heat sources such as open fires or very hot radiators.

Road safety

If someone is prone to seizures it is best not to cross busy roads alone and to be careful with road safety. The DVLA (Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency) has clear rules about driving for people with epilepsy available in their official website.



Flashing Lights

Most children with epilepsy *do not* get seizures triggered by flashing lights (also known as photosensitivity). Your Doctor will tell you if your type of epilepsy can be triggered by light. Regardless, it is always best to take frequent breaks from screens and watch in a well-lit room.

Sleep

Many parents are worried about their children having seizures in their sleep. Although this is possible, very few children come to harm from this.

Sudden unexpected death in epilepsy (SUDEP) is very rare in children. It is estimated that each year, for every 4,500 children with epilepsy, one will die from SUDEP. The risk increases for children with very frequent uncontrolled tonic-clonic seizures at night or for those with severe breathing or heart problems.

