



DO'S AND DON'TS FOR PEOPLE WITH EPILEPSY

As a person with epilepsy you have certain responsibilities about your own lifestyle and care. Here are some do's and don'ts to help you:

DO'S

Get enough sleep every night as a lack of sleep can trigger seizures.

Eat a healthy diet to keep your blood sugar levels stable. Fluctuations in these levels can trigger a seizure. Read the Epilepsy South Africa brochure for advice on a healthy diet.

Exercise regularly after talking to your doctor about suitable exercise/sport for you.

Be safe in your daily activities. For example, use a microwave for cooking and don't lock the bathroom door.

Look after your health as infections or trauma can lower your seizure threshold resulting in more frequent/severe seizures.

Inform people around you about your epilepsy and what to do when you have a seizure. Epilepsy South Africa can provide you with a free poster to help other understand.

Take your medication exactly as prescribed by your doctor. Make sure that you have an adequate supply of your medication (especially if you will be away from home).

Keep a seizure diary to help your doctor treat you effectively. Download your free seizure diary from our website (www.epilepsy.org.za) or contact Epilepsy South Africa on 0860EPILEPSY.

Discuss your epilepsy and treatment with your doctor regularly (e.g. side effects of medication, changes in seizure patterns and a healthy lifestyle).

Contact Epilepsy South Africa for support, advice and assistance on 0860EPILEPSY, info@epilepsy.org.za or find us on Facebook.

DON'T

Expose yourself to over-exertion which may trigger a seizure. This is especially important when exercising.

Use alcohol or other drugs.

Smoke or take in excessive amounts of caffeine (e.g. coffee, tea and fizzy drinks).

Expose yourself to heights or open fires as this makes injuries during a seizure more likely.

Have very hot showers as this could trigger a seizure.

Bath – rather shower as this is safer during a seizure. People have drowned even in shallow water.

Lock any doors (including bathrooms or toilets). If you have a seizure it will be difficult for people to reach you. Swim alone. Always practice water safety.

Expose yourself to flashing or flickering lights if you have photosensitive epilepsy (e.g. watching TV in a dark room). Be aware of flashing lights in clubs, at parties or in movies.

Cycle without a protective helmet and avoid busy roads if possible.

Participate in high-risk activities.

Stop taking your medication or change your dose without discussing this with your doctor first.

Take over-the-counter medicine without discussing this with your doctor or pharmacist first as drugs can interact with each other.

Share your medication with anyone and never take someone else's medication.

Miss your follow-up appointment with your medical team (even if you have not had a seizure for a while).

Allow your epilepsy to define who you are.



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For more information call us on **0860 374537** or email info@epilepsy.org.za