

Safety Tips for Patients with Epilepsy

S. Nizam Ahmed, MD, FRCPC

You may consider these safety tips if you or your loved one has a diagnosis of epilepsy. This list is not exhaustive; therefore you are encouraged to supplement your knowledge with other resources. Your physician can be the best resource to educate you about these and additional issues.

1. If you cook use back-burners of the stove.
2. Ensure that the hot water tank at home is set at a comfortable warm temperature or you have sensors to avoid scalding hot water through your faucets.
3. Use shower instead of using a bath-tub.
4. Check with your physician if swimming is OK. If your physician permits swimming, always have another good swimmer with you who is strong enough to pull you out of water in the event of a seizure.
5. Do not drive until you have the approval of your physician in compliance with the provincial or state laws.
6. Avoid climbing ladders or working on heights.
7. Avoid occupations where a loss of consciousness can cause injury to you or others around you.
8. If you are prescribed any new medication, check with your physician and pharmacist about potential drug interactions with your seizure medications.
9. If you are a woman in the child bearing age group discuss the need for folic acid with your family doctor.
10. Sleep deprivation can trigger seizures. Try to discipline your sleeping habits.