

Make sure your family, friends, teachers or coworkers know seizure first aid. You and your family should know first aid for choking.

Wear a medical identification bracelet or necklace (available from Medic Alert by phoning 1-800-668-1507.)

Carry a small, portable, pre-programmed phone or beeper in case you have to call for help and you are away from a telephone.

* Make specific changes around the home to reduce significantly injuries from falling or burning.
* Carpet the floors, including entranceways and bathrooms, using dense-pile carpet with thick under padding.
* Pad sharp edges of tables and other furniture. Do not leave drawers open.
* Avoid freestanding or table lamps and glass decorations.
* Whenever possible, sit down when doing household chores or using tools.
* Avoid smoking, lighting fires or candles when you are by yourself.
* Keep floors clear of clutter and tie up dangling electrical cords.
* Avoid climbing up on chairs or ladders, especially when alone.
* Put safety gates at the top of steep stairs.
* Use "automatic shut off" appliances, power tools, etc. whenever possible.
* Be careful of irons, hair dryers, lawn mowers, saws, sewing machines, etc.
* Securely lock outside doors if you tend to wander during a seizure.
* Consider placing an alarm on an outside door to alert others.
* If your seizures are very frequent and sudden, consider wearing a helmet with faceguard and/or knee or elbow pads, at least when you are at home alone.

If you live alone, have a "buddy system", if you need to be checked on. Pre-program your phone for emergency contact numbers. A subscription to a Lifeline® Personal Help Button (1-800-387-1215) gives you push button contact with a "responder" from your home.

# Safety Precautions for the Home

**Do the People Around You Know How to Help if You Have a Seizure?**

Seizure Precautions

Home Health Care

**Safety While Travelling**

* Do not drive a car unless you have a valid license and are not having seizures.
* If you cannot drive because of epilepsy, explore local "Dial-a-Ride" services, paratransit and public transportation options. People with a disability are sometimes eligible for local discounts on transportation.
* If you have frequent seizures, the added safety of a taxicab may be worth the extra cost.
* If you wander during a seizure, consider taking a friend along when you travel.
* When taking a train, bus or airplane trip, if you need to travel with an attendant for your seizures, they may be eligible for a discount. Contact the Canadian Epilepsy Alliance in your area for more information.

If escalators or stairs are unusually steep, consider using the elevator instead.

**Safety While Sleeping**

* Avoid using hard-edged bed frames or sharp-cornered bedside tables.
* Avoid top bunks.
* Avoid potentially suffocating sleeping surfaces, like waterbeds.
* If a pillow causes concern, discard it or use a smother proof' egg carton foam pillow.

A monitor in your bedroom may alert others to the sound of a typical seizure.

* Take showers rather than baths.
* Routinely check that the bathroom drain works. Do not let face cloths or sponges block the drain, allowing the tub to fill with water.
* Put non-skid strips or a rubber bath mat on the floor of the shower.
* Shower only when someone else is at home. (Singing in the shower will reassure others that you are doing fine.) Otherwise, take a sponge bath using the sink.
* Set water thermostat low to prevent scalding. Turn on the cold water first and turn off the hot water first.
* Be wary of a very hot shower—some people find heat to be a seizure trigger. Keep your bathroom well ventilated.
* If you fall frequently during seizures, using a shower/tub seat with a safety strap, a hand-held shower nozzle, and padding the edges of the tub with a folded towel may be helpful.
* Avoid glass shower doors. Use shatterproof glass for mirrors.
* Leave the bathroom door unlocked - an "Occupied" sign will do the trick.
* Hang your bathroom door so it opens outwards, instead of inwards, if you might fall against a closed door.
* Avoid using hair dryers, electric razors, or other electrical appliances in the bathroom, or near water, or when you are alone.

###### Consider using a padded toilet seat.

# How to Stay Safe while Bathing