

## Tips for Parents Antiepileptic Medicines

- Treatment to prevent seizures starts with using a medicine called an “antiepileptic drug (AED)”.
- The medicine needs to be taken every day to prevent seizures. Here are some tips for remembering to give the medicine:
  - Give the medicine at the same time everyday as part of your child’s daily routine, such as with a meal or when teeth are brushed.
  - Let your child put a sticker on the calendar whenever the medicine is taken. This provides a fun reward for your child and can be used to keep track of the medicine doses.
  - Use a pill box to remember to help check that a dose wasn’t forgotten.
- It is important to not miss any medicine doses. Sometimes a dose is missed because of illness or because it is forgotten.
  - If a dose is forgotten, give the dose as soon as you remember as long as 2 doses are not being given at the same time. Then give the next dose at least 4 hours later. Do not try to “catch up” on missed doses the next day.
  - If your child is ill and throws up the medicine within 20-30 minutes of giving the dose or you see the medicine come up when your child throws up, try to give the dose as soon as your child is able to keep down small amounts of clear liquids. If your child throws up the dose a second time, don’t repeat the dose. Call your doctor or nurse for help.
- If your child becomes ill or has side effects while you are in the process of either increasing or decreasing the antiepileptic medicine, call your doctor or nurse for instructions about the plan for the next medicine change.
- Some medicines, including over-the-counter medicines like cold medicines or medicines for upset stomachs, may affect your child’s antiseizure medicine - by either making it too strong or too weak. Check with your pharmacist to be sure that other medicines are okay to take with the antiepileptic medicine. It is okay to use acetaminophen (Tylenol®) or ibuprofen when your child is taking an antiseizure medicine.
- Review the teaching sheet about your child’s medicine. Call the doctor or nurse if you notice any problems that you think might be related to the antiepileptic medicine.
- It is a good idea to always carry a list of your child’s medications that includes any vitamins, supplements or home remedies with you. This is called a Home Medication List. This is very helpful when your child has a doctor’s appointment.
- When your child is old enough, help your child learn to remember to take their medicine on their own. A good time to start is when your child is in 5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> grade. You can start by having him/her fill their pillbox every week. Then allow him/her to take the medicine with you double-checking that it wasn’t forgotten.
- When your child is in high school, have him/her start to call the pharmacy to request a refill for their medicine. This helps them prepare to be responsible for this when they are adults.