

Tips for Parents Traveling with a Child Who Has Epilepsy

Enjoyable, safe travel starts with planning before you leave home. Suggestions for easier travel include:

Advance planning

- Call the airlines and explain your needs. Ask what accommodations they provide.
- If you are traveling to locations such as Disney World, call them and ask what help they can provide.
- Pick out snacks, books or toys with your child to help them enjoy the trip.
- Put together a packet that contains phone numbers that you may need including your child's:
 - primary care provider,
 - neurology provider,
 - pharmacist,
 - emergency family contact who knows your child's medical history, and
 - pharmacy and hospital where you will be traveling.

Medication

- Make sure to have prescriptions filled and picked up before leaving home.
- You may need to ask your child's nurse for prescriptions 2-3 weeks before the start of your vacation to be sure you have enough to take with you.
- If needed, call your insurance company to see if they will give you advance doses so you will not run out.
- Carry a written list of medicines and doses. This is called a Home Medication List.
- Bring your pharmacy phone number from home. If needed, they can help you with possible insurance issues at a new pharmacy.
- For air travel, carry two supplies of medicines with you. Put one in your carry-on and the other in your checked baggage. If your child uses Diastat®, keep this in your carry-on bag.
- If your child is not currently using a rescue medicine, such as Diastat®, call your nurse or doctor to see if it is needed for the trip.

Rescue

- Ask for and carry a current emergency care plan signed by your care provider.
- Your child should wear a medical bracelet or necklace stating that he/she has epilepsy. Also include any allergies on the bracelet/necklace.
- Everyone traveling with your child should know seizure first aid. What to do and what not to do during a seizure and how to describe the seizures.

Vagal Nerve Stimulator

- Carry the registration card with you in case it is requested at the airport.
- Ask to have your child manually searched to avoid triggering the security screening device.

Ketogenic Diet

- Ask to have a refrigerator placed in your hotel room to store special ketogenic diet foods.
- Prepare enough meals to have on hand during the time that you are traveling. Plan extra meals in case you are delayed by weather. Be sure to take an insulated carrier and enough cooling packs to keep food that you are carrying safe.
- If you are traveling out of the country, you will probably need a letter from your provider to get permission to take foods for the ketogenic diet in and out of the country.

At your destination

- Check for the location and phone number of a pharmacy and hospital near you.
- Call ahead for advance seating at restaurants and local attractions.
- Visit to the Emergency Room - If you need to visit the ER while on vacation, the following tips may help make it a smooth visit:
- Carry an emergency care plan from your care provider with the doses of emergency medicines already calculated for your child's weight. This care plan should be signed by your care provider.
- Bring notes on what has been done in the past to control your child's seizures. Include information on what has not worked for your child.
- Be an advocate. You know your child's care best.
- Bring your care provider's contact information with you
- Have a hospital bag put together ahead of time so that you will have everything that you need. Include a change of clothes, money, the emergency care plan and your care notebook or notes about your child's care.

Now that you have planned ahead and are prepared for your trip, enjoy the small pleasures and joys of being away from home!