



Research Articles

Creating a Safe Home Environment for Seizures

The risk that a person with epilepsy will be injured during a seizure at home can be greatly reduced by taking some simple safety precautions:

- Carpet the floors with heavy pile and thick underpadding.
- If tables and other furniture have sharp corners, pad them. When shopping for new furniture, look for rounded corners.
- Close fireplace screens when the fire is burning. Don't leave a person with uncontrolled seizures alone in a room with a burning fire.
- Avoid using space heaters that can tip over.
- If the person with epilepsy wants to iron clothing or use a curling iron, be sure that the device has an automatic shut-off switch to prevent burns.
- Use chairs with arms to help prevent falling.

In the bathroom

- Hang doors so they open outwards instead of inwards. Then if the person falls against the door, it can still be opened.
- Use carpeting on the floor, with extra padding.
Routinely check that the drain works properly before the person takes a bath or shower.
- If the person falls frequently, consider using a shower or tub seat with a safety strap.
- Keep water levels in the tub low.
- Set the temperature of the water heater low (120 degrees F [48.9C]) so that it won't scald a person who loses consciousness.
- The person with epilepsy should not use any electrical appliances in the bathroom or near water.

In the kitchen

- Cook with a microwave oven.
- When using the stove, try to use the back burners.
- Use plastic containers, plates, and drinking cups whenever possible.
- Use cups with lids (commuter cups) to prevent burns from spills.
- If the person with epilepsy needs to move containers of hot food or liquids, it is safer to slide them along the counter or use a cart to move them to another room.
- It is safer for the person to wear rubber gloves when handling knives or washing dishes and glassware in the sink.

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