



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. Ask about guidelines for carry on medicines.
- If you are traveling to theme parks or other locations, call and ask what help they provide.
- Pick out snacks, books or toys with your child to help them enjoy the trip.
Put together a packet that has phone numbers you may need, including your child's:
Primary care provider
 - Neurology provider
 - Pharmacist
 - Emergency family contact who knows your child's medical history
 - Pharmacy and hospital where you will be traveling

Medication

- Be sure to have your prescriptions filled and picked up before you leave home.
- Get prescriptions refilled 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- If your child is not using a rescue medicine now, such as Diastat®, call your nurse or doctor to see if it is needed for the trip.

Emergency Care

Ask for and carry a current emergency care plan signed by your care provider. Your child should wear a medical bracelet or necklace stating they have epilepsy. Also include any allergies on the bracelet/necklace or shoetag. Everyone traveling with your child should know seizure first aid. Know 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 needed at the airport.
- If airline or tourist attraction screening is needed, ask to have your child manually searched. This will avoid setting off the security screening device.

Ketogenic Diet

- Ask to have a refrigerator in your hotel room to store special diet foods.
- Make 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 carrying safe.
- For travel out of the country, you will probably need a letter from the doctor to take foods for the 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.
- 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 note book or notes about your child's care.
- If you need to visit the Emergency Room while on vacation, the following tips may help make it a smooth visit.
- Carry an emergency care plan for your care provider. The plan should include 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.

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