

Tips for Parents: Antiepileptic Medicines

Treatment to prevent seizures starts with using a medicine called an antiepileptic drug (AED).

- The AED needs to be taken every day to prevent seizures. Here are some tips for remembering to give medicine:
 - ⇒ Give the medicine at the same time everyday as part of your child's daily routine. Have your child take it 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. It is also a good way to keep track of the medicine doses.
 - ⇒ Use a pill box to help check that a dose wasn't forgotten.
- It is important to not miss any medicine doses.
 - ⇒ If you forget a dose, give the medicine as soon as you remember. Do not give 2 doses at the same time (unless your doctor says this is okay to do.) Give the next dose at least 4 hours later. Do not try to catch up on missed doses.
 - ⇒ If your child throws up the medicine within 20-30 minutes of giving the dose, 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 either increasing or decreasing the AED medicine, call your doctor or nurse. They will give you instructions about the plan for the next medicine change.
- Some medicines, including over the counter medicines may affect your child's AED medicines by making it too strong or too weak. Check with your pharmacist to be sure that other medicines are okay to take with the AED 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 AED.
- It is good idea to carry a list of your child's medications with you. This list should include any vitamins, supplements, or home remedies. 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 them learn to remember to take their medicine on their own. A good time to start is when your child is between 5th and 6th grade. You can start by having them fill their pillbox every week. Let your child take the medicine with you double-checking that it wasn't forgotten.
- When your child is in high school, have them call the pharmacy to request a refill for their medicine. This helps them prepare to be responsible for this when they are adults.