

Antiepileptic Medicines: Tips for Parents

Treatment to prevent seizures starts with an antiepileptic drug (AED). The AED needs to be taken every day to prevent seizures. Here are some tips to help you remember it every day:

- Give the medicine at the same time every day. Make it 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 when the medicine is taken. This is 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 prevent missing a dose.
- It is important to not miss a dose.
 - If you forget a dose, give the medicine as soon as you remember, but **do not give 2 doses at the same time**. 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 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 gets sick or has side effects while you are either giving more or less of the medicine dose, call your doctor or nurse. They will talk with you about the plan for the next dose change.
- Some over-the-counter (OTC) medicines may make your child's medicine too strong or too weak. Check with your pharmacist to be sure that OTC medicines are okay to take with their medicine. It is okay to use acetaminophen (Tylenol®) or ibuprofen when your child is taking a seizure 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 caused by the medicine.
- Carry a list of your child's medicines with you. The 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 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 5th or 6th grade. You can start by having your child fill their pillbox every week. Let your child take the medicine on their own, but double-check that it wasn't forgotten.
- When your child is in high school, have them call the pharmacy to refill their medicine. This helps them prepare to be responsible for this when they are adults.

This teaching sheet is meant to help you care for your child. It does not take the place of medical care. Talk with your healthcare provider for diagnosis, treatment, and follow-up.