

Keeping your baby safe when you have epilepsy

Epilepsy can come with some risks to safety. However, by putting some safety measures in place, you can lower this risk for you and your baby. As well as the following suggestions, Epilepsy Action also has information about keeping safe when you have epilepsy and how to do a safety check.

There is also general information about baby and child safety on the NHS website. And you can always seek further advice from your midwife or health visitor if there's anything you're not sure about.

Bathing, changing and dressing

- Don't give your baby a bath unless there is another adult with you. If you are alone, wash them with water from a shallow bowl, using a cloth or a sponge. Make sure the bowl and cloth or sponge is out of their reach.
- Change them on the floor rather than a changing table or bed.
- Keep nappies and changing materials on each floor of the house. This is safer than carrying them up and down stairs.

Feeding your baby

- Whether breast or bottle feeding, sit on the floor, on a thick rug, with your back well supported. This should reduce the risk of the baby falling onto a hard surface if you have a seizure.
- If you always fall to the same side during a seizure, make sure the baby is the opposite side (if possible).
- If your epilepsy medicine makes you confused or you have memory problems, keep a note of when you fed the baby and how much they had. There are a number of apps that can help you with this.
- Label food and milk containers with the date and time you prepared it.

Keeping your baby safe during and after your seizures

- If possible, ask someone else to carry the baby up and down stairs. If this is not possible, carry them in a car seat with the straps secured. This will help to protect them if you fall during a seizure.
- Consider using a pushchair to move the baby around so they don't get hurt if you drop them (especially if you have hard floors).
- Try to have a plan for someone else to look after the baby if you need to rest after a seizure. If this isn't possible, try to make the room as hazard free as possible. There is lots of information on how to do this on the NHS website.
- If you are going to be alone with your baby, ask a friend or relative to phone you or call round at an agreed time, to check you are both ok.

- If you are alone in the house a lot, let a neighbour or trusted friend know. They can look out for anything unusual.
- Don't leave the keys in the locked door, and don't use bolts or chains. This will help make sure people can get in if you need any help. Consider giving a spare key to a neighbour or getting a key safe for trusted adults to use.
- Don't use irons, curling tongs, or hair straighteners when you are alone with your baby. They stay hot enough to burn a baby even when they have been switched off for some time.
- Always keep your medicines out of reach of children.

Keeping your baby safe when you are outside

Prams and Pushchairs:

- Choose a pram with lots of padding if there is a risk you may push it over during a seizure – it could protect the baby if you fall. Alternatively, use a portable car seat / pram combination.
- Buy a safety brake that automatically comes on when the handle is released.
- If you become confused during a seizure, tie a label with some emergency contact numbers to the handle of the pram or pushchair. Epilepsy Action have a free epilepsy ID card you can download or order.

Child Carriers and Baby Slings:

The child might not be safe if you have a seizure while carrying them in a child carrier or baby sling. Before deciding whether or not to use one, you might want to answer these questions:

- Do your seizures cause you to fall? If so, would this hurt the child if they were in a sling or carrier at the time?
- Do you have an aura or warning before a seizure? If so, would that give you enough time to make the child safe?

Baby Changing Facilities:

- Consider carrying a changing mat with you to use on the floor, rather than using a changing table in public toilets.

Adapted from [Looking after a baby or young child - Epilepsy Action](#)

Additional resources that may be useful:

- [Top 10 Tips for Relaxing During Pregnancy](#)
- [Pregnancy and epilepsy - Epilepsy Action](#)
- [Mental health before, during and after pregnancy | Tommy's](#)

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