



The Young Adult with Epilepsy: Looking Forward to the Future

Practical Advice on Managing Epilepsy

Máire White

March 10th 2010



Diagnosis

Coping with the diagnosis can be difficult

Denial/anger/disbelief

Diagnosis based on clinical history +/-
investigations

Plans for the future



What the doctor or nurse can do for you

- Ensure your seizures are correctly diagnosed
- Treat with appropriate drugs for your type of epilepsy
- Give you relevant first aid advice/discuss triggers and lifestyle issues
- Ensure regular medical reviews of your epilepsy
- Look at other drugs/treatments if medication doesn't work at first for you



What can you do for yourself?

- Learn what brings on your seizures:
 - Look at possible triggers
 - Missing a dose of medicine
 - Lack of sleep
 - Excessive alcohol
 - Illegal drug use
 - Increased stress
 - Excessive caffeine
 - Illness/fever
 - Flickering lights for a small number of PWE
 - Hormonal changes in girls



General safety issues

- Shower V Bath
- Cooking
- Open Fires
- Furniture at home
- Safety pillows
- Identification
- Brainwave





Risk Management

- Must be individualised for each person
- Swim?
- Go to gym?
- Go to college?
- Live away from home?
- Travel abroad?
- Get a job?





Can I swim?

- Depends on frequency of seizures
- Never swim alone
- Never swim if not feeling well
- Swim with a buddy who knows what to do in case of seizure
- Identify yourself to lifeguard
- Don't get over tired





Going to College

- Great support from colleges
- Don't let it all be about epilepsy
- Inform house mates about medication and what to do if seizure happens
- Be aware of triggers





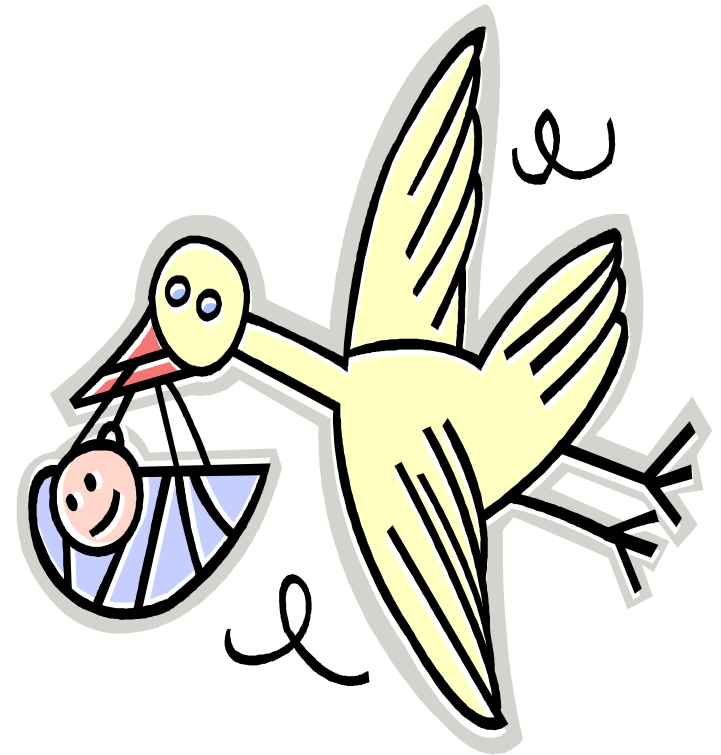
Driving Legislation



- 1 year seizure free
- Simple Partial Seizures:
May drive, needs
certification by
Neurologist
- Nocturnal seizures **only**
for > 2 yrs
- No heavy goods vehicles

Pre conception

- Folic Acid 5 mgs daily
- Plan pregnancy
- Discuss need to change anti-epileptic drugs (AEDs)
- Epilim (valproate)





Treatment in pregnancy

- Continue usual drugs
- Risk to mother and baby if AEDs stopped suddenly
- May need increased dose of AEDs during pregnancy
- Vitamin K from 36 weeks
- Avoid pethidine at time of delivery
- Register pregnancy at 1800 320 820



Just had a baby?

- Rest and sleep essential following delivery
- Accept help from others
- Care while bathing baby
- Look after yourself



Rescue Medication

- Given for prolonged seizures or clusters of any type of seizure
- Given when a second seizure quickly follows a first seizure
- Individualised plan for each person with epilepsy. Discuss when to give with nurse or doctor

Buccal Midazolom (Epistatus)

- Holding the bottle firmly, turn it upside-down and slowly pull back on the plunger of the syringe to withdraw the prescribed amount of medicine.



Administration

- Insert the syringe horizontally into the buccal cavity (between the lower gum and the cheek) on one side
- Slowly squeeze half of the medicine into one side of the mouth and repeat on the other side





Buccal Midazolam (Epistatus)

- Administered into side of mouth or nose
- Can be administered in public places
- Usually no hangover effect but person will probably sleep for a while
- Can be GIVEN TWICE with no significant problems as per patient information sheet



To finish up.....





- Thank you for listening