

**When your middle- and/or high-school  
age child with partial-onset seizures goes  
back to school**

# **PREPARATION IS KEY**



# Epilepsy & school



For most school-age children, summer is a time for fun and to unwind. For children diagnosed with partial-onset seizures, it's also a time to help prepare them for the upcoming school year.

Living with epilepsy while going to school can pose many challenges. Children with epilepsy may have more difficulty with learning, language, memory, attention, and problem solving.<sup>1,2</sup> That's why it's important to help them better understand their partial-onset seizures and prepare them for back-to-school success.

**Fact:**

In the United States, epilepsy affects more than 326,000 children under 15 years of age.<sup>1</sup>

# Prepare children for seizures & school



Going back to school can be an emotional time for many children. It may be an especially challenging time for children with epilepsy.

That is why it's a good idea to prepare your child with partial-onset seizures for a new school year. Spend some time this summer addressing potential issues in advance to help better manage seizures when back at school. Being prepared can make a difference!



## Tips:

- **Adjust routines**, such as bedtimes, mealtimes, and medication schedules<sup>3</sup>
- **Make sure your child gets enough sleep** as sleep can affect the timing, number, and severity of seizures<sup>2</sup>
- **Talk with children** about any concerns they may have about seizures at school<sup>4</sup>
  - How are they feeling?
  - Are they comfortable with how seizures are handled at home, school, or in other settings?
  - Is there anything they would prefer **not** to share with others?
  - How are they getting along with others?

## Reach out



There are more than a **quarter of a million** parents in the United States going through a similar experience of raising a child with epilepsy.<sup>5</sup> Learn more and find a support group in your area by contacting the Epilepsy Foundation at [www.efa.org](http://www.efa.org)

# Help prepare school personnel



It's also important to prepare school personnel for your child's attendance in the new school year.

- **Connect with your child's school** about potential needs in the classroom and how epilepsy may affect his or her learning and behavior<sup>3,4</sup>
- **Schedule a parent meeting** with the teacher, school nurse, bus driver, and support staff<sup>3</sup>
- Prepare and review a detailed **Seizure Action Plan**, including<sup>3,4</sup>:
  - Information about the child's typical seizures
  - Medicines taken on a daily basis
  - First aid steps
  - Emergency medication
  - Contact details for parents and doctors



**Tips:**

## Connect

- ➔ Offer to connect the school with the **Epilepsy Foundation** for training school personnel about epilepsy

# Help your child stay on track with treatment



Remembering to take daily medication can be challenging for everyone, especially for children. Continuing to take medication for partial-onset seizures is important.

- **Develop a routine around medications:** use prompts like brushing teeth<sup>6</sup>
- **Set a recurring alarm:** add an alarm on phones or watches as an alert for them to take their medication<sup>6</sup>
- **Medication reminder app:** smartphone apps can help to stay on schedule<sup>6</sup>



**Tips:**

## Track

- ➔ **A seizure diary app** can be used as a personal health assistant, helping your child stay on track with medications, reminders, and progress<sup>7</sup>

# BE PREPARED

## When middle- and high-school age children head back to school



- Adjust routines<sup>3</sup>
- Make sleep a priority<sup>2</sup>
- Connect with the school<sup>3</sup>
- Schedule a parent/teacher meeting<sup>3</sup>
- Develop a Seizure Action Plan<sup>3,4</sup>
- Ensure he or she stays on track with treatment<sup>6</sup>

### References:

**1.** Epilepsy Association. Be smart about epilepsy: seizure management and responsive treatment manual for personnel to assist students with epilepsy managing epilepsy in the schools. <http://www.epilepsyinfo.org/besmart.html>. Accessed June 18, 2023. **2.** Epilepsy Foundation Wellness Institute. Wellness and epilepsy. 2019. <http://www.epilepsy.com>. Accessed June 18, 2024. **3.** Epilepsy Foundation. Preparing for back to school success. 2022. <https://www.epilepsy.com/stories/preparing-back-to-school-success>. Accessed June 18, 2024. **4.** Epilepsy Foundation. Preparing for seizures and school. 2015. <https://www.epilepsy.com/stories/preparing-seizures-and-school>. Accessed June 18, 2024. **5.** Epilepsy Foundation. Reach Out. A guide for parents of teens with epilepsy. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <http://www.stacks.cdc.gov>. Accessed June 19, 2024. **6.** Healthnews. How to help your child take medication. 2023. <https://healthnews.com/family-health/child-health/how-to-help-your-child-take-medication/>. Accessed June 18, 2024. **7.** Epilepsy Foundation. Using seizure diaries. 2019. <https://www.epilepsy.com/manage/tracking/seizure-diaries>. Accessed June 19, 2024.