

## **Safety issues in people with epilepsy**

Epilepsy is a neurological disorder characterized by spontaneous recurrent seizures and is managed by drugs known as anti-epileptic drugs (AEDs). These drugs work reasonably well in two-thirds of the patient population, but the rest of the population does not respond to AEDs (these people are called 'refractory' or resistant to AEDs). All patients with epilepsy need to make themselves aware of certain seizure-related emergencies – these conditions are status epilepticus (SE), cluster seizures and Sudden Unexpected Death in Epilepsy (SUDEP). These conditions are relatively rare, but getting information about them is the best way to prevent them. More information about these can be found in Dr. Lancman's book "[What you need to know if epilepsy has touched your life: A Guide in Plain English](#)".

### **General practical tips for people with epilepsy**

- Make sure that your floors are carpeted and any sharp corners (e.g., table corners) are padded to reduce the risk of injury due to a fall.
- Don't smoke.
- Don't light a fire or a candle when you are home alone.
- Make sure the drains in your bathtub and shower are working properly to prevent drowning should you lose consciousness while showering.
- Set your water temperature to a moderate level to avoid being scalded if you lose consciousness while running the hot water.
- Don't take a bath in deep water, to prevent drowning.
- Don't lock the bathroom door; use an "occupied" sign on the doorknob instead.
- Install a bathroom door that opens outward for easier access, in case you have a seizure and fall against the door.
- Use plastic glasses and dinnerware instead of glass and china to keep from cutting yourself if you lose consciousness while holding them.