

How can schools assist students with Epilepsy?

Academic:

- Start academic interventions right away under one of two laws: IDEA (Other Health Impairment) or Section 504
- Provide assessment to target academic needs and provide useful accommodations and modifications
- Allow extra time to complete class work or projects
- Assign a moderate work load that emphasizes quality vs. quantity
- Provide the student with an organizational checklist for routine activities, materials needed and steps to follow to assist with planning and structure of the school day
- Because children with seizures may have difficulty with transitions, build predictability and routine into the classroom environment
- Provide instruction targeting more than one learning style to assist with memory problems
- Provide recorded information, highlighted textbooks and practice with recall skills
- Use repetition and direct instruction to help with focus and attention, which is weakened even when a child is not having a seizure
- Instructional language should be simple, clear and consistent
- Provide preferential seating to optimize concentration and lessen distractions

Social/ Emotional

- Provide opportunities for success to elevate low self-esteem
- Reduce emphasis on competition; competitive activities may cause undue stress, leading to simple mistakes -repetitive failure could lead to avoidance of situations, assignments or responsibilities
- Provide counseling to address psychological or social effects of condition
- Behavior intervention plans can be helpful for students with behavioral concerns
- School nurse or hospital personnel can share age appropriate information regarding epilepsy with peers with parental consent

Physical

- Closely monitor student during P.E./recess to ensure safety
- Provide appropriate safety equipment for P.E./recess such as helmets, padding, life vests, etc.
- Encourage the use of the buddy system during field trips or recess
- Allow for an opportunity to rest after a seizure, if necessary
- Provide breaks in the day for the administration of medication, if necessary
- Provide regular communication to the parent/guardian
- Inform teachers and staff of student's specific needs and condition
- Utilize the buddy system in the classroom and hallways so that an adult can be notified if a seizure occurs

Resources

www.kidshealth.org

www.epilepsynl.com

Growing Up With Epilepsy by Lynn Bennett Blackburn

American Epilepsy Society -

www.aesnet.org Epilepsy

Foundation of America -

www.epilepsyfoundation.org

School Services Department

Children's Health Children's Medical Center

Dallas Campus: 214-456-7733

Plano Campus: 469-303-4670