

Travelling with a child with epilepsy

Children with epilepsy can travel to holiday destinations in the same way as any other children, although it is important that you think about taking the following precautions:

- Before you leave for a holiday make sure your holiday insurance covers emergency medical treatment for the child's epilepsy. Contact the Young Epilepsy helpline for details of insurance companies offering insurance for those with epilepsy.
- If the child has been prescribed emergency medication (also known as rescue medication) for prolonged seizures, check the expiry date and have it with you at all times.
- If you are travelling by plane, you should take the child's medication in your hand luggage in case your luggage is lost or delayed. If the medication is in liquid form, check with the airline the rules about taking liquids on board a plane and inform them of your child's epilepsy.
- Because the names of drugs vary in different countries, the medication should be taken in its original packaging and you should be aware of the scientific (generic) name.
- Take extra medication in case your return journey is delayed.
- Give the child their medication at regular intervals and make gradual adjustments to the time difference of the country you are visiting.
- Carry a doctor's letter with details of the child's condition and the medication that they take (preferably translated into the language of the country you are visiting). Online personal records can be created at www.doctorbabel.com and the information can be translated to the language of your choice.



Better futures for young lives with epilepsy

- Avoid letting the child become overtired or dehydrated from the travelling and the heat.
- If the child is going to be staying up late at night, encourage them to have a sleep during the day to avoid overtiredness.
- If the child is going to be away from you for any periods during the holiday, it would be a good idea for them to wear an SOS bracelet or tag, with details of their medical condition. (This may be something you would want to consider anyway).
- 'The Traveller's Handbook for People with Epilepsy', produced by the International Bureau for Epilepsy (IBE) has useful information and epilepsy First Aid instructions translated into 13 languages. These can be downloaded from www.ibe-epilepsy.org/publications/travellers-handbook.

Accessibility for the disabled child



One of the difficulties of travelling with a disabled or wheelchair-bound child is the unknown barriers that difficult access may throw up when visiting new places.

A website called Disabledgo is a popular site for disability access information. It was launched to mark the European Year of Disabled People and it gives details of the accessibility of various venues; simply type in the name of the town and the places you want to visit. This information can be found at www.disabledgo.info.



The Disabled Person's Railcard

If your child is disabled and has been issued with a Disabled Person's Railcard, your child will travel at the standard child fare, but the adult travelling with them will receive a discount of one third off the standard adult fare.

For details about the railcard, special offers and information on travel etc, visit www.disabledpersons-railcard.co.uk or ring Rail Travel Made Easy on 0845 605 0525 or email disability@atoc.org.

The National Key Scheme (NKS)

This scheme allows the disabled to buy (for a small fee) a key which enables them to access around 7,000 locked public toilets situated around the country. The keys can be obtained from the disability network - RADAR at www.radar.org.uk or by phoning 020 7250 3222.

Better futures for young lives with epilepsy

Better futures for young lives with epilepsy