

## Recreational Drugs

Street drugs such as cocaine, ecstasy/MDMA and heroin all increase the risk of having a seizure. For more information about drug use visit

[www.talktofrank.com](http://www.talktofrank.com)

## Managing your epilepsy at school or college

Managing your epilepsy at school or college can be challenging however teenagers like you have reported the following things can help

- Be open about your Epilepsy – tell teachers and close friends
- Make sure teachers and close friends know what to do if you have a seizure
- If you feel tired following a seizure ask a teacher if you can be excused until you feel better
- School work and exams can be adjusted to take account of your epilepsy – perhaps by having longer to complete your coursework.

## Transition Support Worker in London

Young Epilepsy has a Transition Support Worker called Alex Gwilt-Cox. He provides support and guidance in achieving goals to young people with Epilepsy aged between 14-25 years old across London. Support is given for the following:

- CV Writing
- Jobs/ Employment
- Housing/benefits
- Meeting New People
- Health

You can contact Alex, the Transition Support Worker in London, on 07825 188 903 or [agwilt-cox@youngepilepsy.org.uk](mailto:agwilt-cox@youngepilepsy.org.uk)

## Patient advice and liaison service (PALS)

If you have a compliment, complaint or concern please contact our PALS team on 020 7288 5551 or [whh-tr.whithealthPALS@nhs.net](mailto:whh-tr.whithealthPALS@nhs.net)

If you need a large print, audio or translated copy of this leaflet please contact us on 020 7288 3182. We will try our best to meet your needs.

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Date published: 04/09/2019  
Review date: 04/09/2021  
Ref: CYP/Paed/TYPEAS/01

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## Transition of young people with epilepsy to adult services



## What is Transition?

This is the term we use for the gradual process of moving you from children's to adult services and helps prepare you and your parents for the move. You will be offered an appointment in the transition clinic where you will meet your adult neurology team alongside your current Paediatric Epilepsy team.

## Do I have to transition?

Yes. Your current Paediatric Epilepsy team are experts at looking after children and young people with Epilepsy however as you grow older your needs and concerns will change too and the Adult Services will be better placed to support you. As you get older you will also want to be more independent and take responsibility for your treatment.

### Age 11-12 (year 7)

You will discuss issues such as independence, safety, leisure activities, and medication.

### Age 13-14 (year 9)

This is an opportunity to discuss lifestyle issues relating to your epilepsy.

You may feel that you would like to meet with your Epilepsy Nurse independently and you can of course request this.

### Age 16 and above

This is an opportunity to discuss issues relating to education, careers, driving, independence, drugs, alcohol, sleep, contraception etc. You may want to spend part of this appointment without your parents.

## What can I do to get ready for the transition?

- Learn about your condition and treatment
- Practise asking and answering questions
- Take some responsibility for your medication, what you need, when and how much
- Learn how to order further prescriptions
- Practise making appointments with your consultant/family doctor
- Keep a list of important phone numbers
- Try spending some time in clinic without your parents
- Find out what changes in your condition need urgent attention
- Find out who to contact in an emergency
- Keep to agreed treatment plans

## Keeping safe when out with friends

It is important that you go out, see friends and enjoy life however the following safety tips are issues you need to consider:

- Plan ahead – if you do have a seizure would the people around you know what to do?
- Keep in touch – even just a quick text will let your family worry less
- We advise you to wear medical identification jewellery and carry an identification card (available on Amazon or Young Epilepsy website). This should contain details of medication you take, how long your seizures normally last and your emergency contact.

## Contraception

Some antiepileptic drugs (AEDs) can make the contraceptive pill and morning after pills work less effectively which could lead to an unplanned pregnancy. Make sure to make an appointment with your GP to discuss birth control when you are ready to become sexually active.

Barrier methods such as condoms are not affected by epilepsy medicines and also protect against unwanted sexually transmitted infections so we always advise using a barrier method alongside other methods of contraception.

## Cigarettes and Alcohol

We do not advise anyone to smoke. If you are smoking during a seizure you are at risk of burning yourself and/or starting a fire.

Drinking too much alcohol may stop your AEDs from working effectively and can seriously increase the risk of a seizure. It is recommended that you should not drink more than 2 units of alcohol a day – as a rough guide a pint of beer is 2.5 units.

For more information on units of alcohol please visit

[www.nhs.uk/livewell/alcohol/pages/alcohol-units.aspx](http://www.nhs.uk/livewell/alcohol/pages/alcohol-units.aspx)

Skipping medication in order to binge drink is very dangerous and increases the risk of having seizures.

Set an alarm on your phone if you are going out – to remind you to take your medication at the usual time.