



## How well are you taking care of your epilepsy?

Living with epilepsy can be challenging but there are many self-care skills you can build to help manage your condition. Self-care includes adopting certain lifestyle behaviors to take control of your health and care well for yourself.<sup>1</sup>

### Take the quiz!

Place a check mark (✓) next to each statement that you agree with.<sup>1</sup>

1. I know about my condition. ☐
2. I take my seizure medication as prescribed. ☐
3. I check with my doctor before taking other medicines or supplements. ☐
4. I keep a record of my seizures and seizure triggers to track patterns and learn how to avoid seizure triggers. ☐
5. I get at least 7 to 8 hours of sleep each night. ☐
6. I exercise regularly and safely each day. ☐
7. I follow a well-balanced diet and keep a healthy weight. ☐
8. I don't use tobacco, drink alcohol excessively, or abuse other substances. ☐
9. I practice ways to lower stress. ☐
10. I keep in touch with friends and family for support. ☐
11. I talk to my doctor about health concerns. ☐
12. I keep other health conditions in check. ☐
13. I get help for emotional problems. ☐
14. I use memory strategies to help with memory problems. ☐

Total number of check marks: \_\_\_\_\_

### How did you do?<sup>1</sup>

**10 or more:** You manage your epilepsy well!

**5 – 10:** Excellent! Keep up the good work!

**3 – 5:** Good job! Try to add a few more to your routine.

**0 – 3:** You're on your way! Try to add a few more to your routine.

**Talk with your health care team about ways you can improve self-care**

## Self-care habits to help you live well with epilepsy

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### Take your medicine as prescribed.

Medicine is one of the most common ways of treating epilepsy. There are many different medication options that can help to bring your seizures under control.<sup>2,4</sup>

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### Keep a seizure diary.

Keeping a record of your seizures and looking for patterns can help you in discussions with your doctors and nurses.<sup>2</sup>

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### Manage seizure triggers.

A trigger is something that can occur before a seizure. Knowing your seizure triggers can help you recognize when a seizure may be about to occur. Understanding what could trigger your seizures may help you avoid certain types of activities or events to help avoid the chance of a seizure.<sup>2,5</sup>

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### Reduce stress.

For many people with epilepsy, stress can trigger seizures, in particular emotional stress such as worry, fear, frustration, or anger. Speak with your health care team on ways to manage stress levels.<sup>2,6</sup>

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### Exercise safely.

Exercising regularly has many health benefits for people with epilepsy. Exercise may improve seizure control, mood disorders associated with epilepsy (including depression and anxiety), sleep, cognition, and overall quality of life.<sup>2,7</sup>

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### Get enough sleep.

For people with epilepsy, sleep can affect the frequency, timing, and length of seizures. Lack of adequate sleep is often shown to be a trigger of seizures.<sup>2,8</sup>

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### Eat well.

Good nutrition has been connected with improving seizure control. It is important to know which foods may aggravate your seizures. Be sure to talk with your health care team about your diet and healthy eating.<sup>2,9</sup>



Making even small adjustments to lifestyle choices can be beneficial to your overall well-being and can help toward keeping your seizures under control. Take time to speak with your doctors and nurses about self-care habits where you think you're doing well and areas that you may need to improve.

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**References:** 1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Managing Epilepsy Well Checklist. Epilepsy Self-Management Is A Partnership. Accessed April 12, 2022. <https://www.cdc.gov/epilepsy/managing-epilepsy/checklist.htm> 2. Managing Epilepsy Well Network. Accessed May 9, 2022. <https://managingepilepsywell.org/self-management> 3. Epilepsy Foundation. Seizure Medicines. Accessed May 9, 2022. <https://www.epilepsy.com/treatment/medicines#Medicine-Is-The-Most-Common-Way-Of-Treating-Epilepsy-And-Is-Almost-Always-The-First-Treatment-Tried> 4. American Academy of Neurological Surgeons. Accessed May 6, 2022. <https://www.aans.org/en/Patients/Neurosurgical-Conditions-and-Treatments/Epilepsy> 5. Epilepsy Foundation. Seizure Triggers. Accessed May 9, 2022. <https://www.epilepsy.com/what-is-epilepsy/seizure-triggers> 6. Epilepsy Foundation. Stress, Mood, and Seizures. Accessed May 9, 2022. <https://www.epilepsy.com/complications-risks/moods-behavior/stress-mood-and-seizures> 7. Epilepsy Foundation. Fitness and Exercise With Epilepsy. Accessed May 9, 2022. <https://www.epilepsy.com/lifestyle/diet-exercise/fitness> 8. Epilepsy Foundation. Sleep and Epilepsy. Accessed May 9, 2022. <https://www.epilepsy.com/complications-risks/sleep> 9. Epilepsy Foundation. Healthy Eating With Epilepsy. Accessed May 9, 2022. <https://www.epilepsy.com/lifestyle/diet-exercise/healthy-eating>.