

## **Tips for Parents: Lifestyle Factors**

**Certain things may make seizures occur more easily. These are called “triggers.” Some triggers can be avoided, such as:**

- Lack of Sleep
- Forgetting to take your medication
- Drinking Alcohol

**Other triggers, such as getting sick or for women, getting your menstrual period, can’t be avoided - they are just part of life. Often taking good care of your body can help to avoid some of the seizure triggers.**

- Eat 3 well balanced meals every day.
- Get regular exercise to keep the body healthy. Being involved in sports or any fun activities are good ways to get exercise. Talk with your doctor or nurse about taking part in physical activity.
- Get a full night’s sleep. Children should get at least 10-12 hours of sleep a night, and teenagers should get at least 8-10.
- Avoid caffeine close to bedtime. Caffeine may make it harder to get a proper night’s sleep. Remember that chocolate, most sodas, teas and coffee contain caffeine, especially energy drinks.

**As your child gets older, help them learn to take part in their own health care.**

- When your child turns 8, begin talking to them about the changes that will happen in clinic. Tell your child that doctors and nurses will start to ask them questions directly. This will let your child get comfortable answering questions while they have the safety of a parent in the room.
- Work with your child at home to take an active role in their care. Gently encourage independence, but know that it will take time.
- When your child is 14, encourage them to see the health care team without you for most of the visit. You can join the visit at the end to review any new information. This will also give you a chance to ask any questions or address concerns you may have.