EPILEPSY NEW ZEALAND
Kia titiro ki te tangata | See the person

Kitchen

Kitchens can present a number of hazards related to heat, implements and wet surfaces. In addition, how food is prepared, cooked and cleaned is another safety consideration. Some people who experience seizures which affect awareness or lead to falls choose to prepare food using food processors instead of knives, or purchase pre-cut or already prepared meals to reduce kitchen risks. Others prefer to prepare food only when someone else is in the house.

Some tips which might assist in increasing your safety in the kitchen:

- Purchase fresh vegetables in pre-cut packs and ask butchers to cut meat to your requirements.
- Sit down while preparing food.
- Consider using a microwave instead of a stove or oven, as they automatically turn off after cooking has ended, lessoning the chance of a physical burn or a fire.
- Consider using an electric steamer for rice and/or a slow cooker for the preparation of other meals.
- Consider using an electric stove, so that there is no open flame.
- Use a rubber mat under chopping boards, plates and bowls.
- If using the stove top, use rings or burners towards the back making it harder to accidentally touch the hot dish.
- Use plastic containers and/or dishes, rather than glass ones.
- Be sure to use an oven mitt when cooking, and rubber gloves when washing dishes.
- Cordless kettles which switch off and have a 'locking' lid can assist in preventing hot water scalding.
- Don't cook when you feel tired.

If a person has a seizure while eating or drinking there is a risk of choking or the liquid entering the lungs rather than the stomach. Because of this, it's really important that family, friends or carers know basic first aid to assist someone who is choking. It's also very important to 'sit up' when eating and, where possible, use chairs with an armrest to prevent falls. Always remember to not let a person eat, drink or swallow medication after a seizure – wait some time and make sure they are safe to swallow first.

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