In case of an emergency
If you fall during a seizure and cause an injury to either your teeth or jaw, seek medical attention immediately.

How can I find out more?
You can contact the Epilepsy Foundation.
Call 1-800-332-1000 or visit www.epilepsyfoundation.org.
Throughout the website or the toll free number, you can also find the local Epilepsy Foundation nearest you.

This pamphlet is intended to provide basic information to the general public. It is not intended to be, nor is it medical advice. Readers are warned against changing medical schedules or life activities based on the information without first consulting a physician.

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Good dental health is important to everyone. It is especially important for people who take antiepileptic medications.
Certain antiepileptic drugs and other medications can cause dental problems. These problems can be limited and controlled if you practice good dental hygiene habits on a daily basis, and visit the dentist regularly.

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Dental Health and Epilepsy
Anti-epileptic drugs associated with dental problems
Dental problems often occur in people, especially children, who use a commonly prescribed antiepileptic drug called Dilantin. It is not known why Dilantin causes dental problems but it can lead to painful, swollen, red and inflamed gums. An Ounce of Prevention
Regular brushing and flossing are key to preventing the growth of acid producing bacteria. When bacterial colonies grow on the teeth, they form a soft extra-white substance called plaque. Bacteria within these colonies produce acid and a waste product, the plaque can lead to tooth decay (cavities) and red, swollen and irritated gums. By limiting the growth of bacteria with thorough brushing and flossing, you will protect the teeth and gums from damage and discomfort. Good oral hygiene habits that should be developed include:
• Brush twice a day with fluoride toothpaste.
• Floss daily to remove the plaque and food particles that collect between the teeth and under the gums.
• Eat a balanced diet and limit snacks between meals.
• Visit the dentist regularly.

Eat right and limit snacks
The best diet for good dental health is the same one that fuels overall health. Watch intake of sweets and junk food which encourage the growth of bacteria on the teeth. Brush the back teeth and front teeth in about a 45-degree angle against the gums. When brushing, hold the brush against the outer surfaces, the inner surfaces and finally brush the chewing surfaces of the teeth. Use the end of the brush to brush the inside surfaces of the front teeth with a gentle up and down stroke. Make sure you also brush your tongue to remove bacteria and freshen breath. Because brushing doesn't clean every surface of the teeth, flossing is necessary for a really clean mouth. Brush each tooth including the back side of the last tooth.

Brushing and Flossing
Brush twice a day with a soft bristled brush and use fluoride toothpaste. Hold the toothbrush at a 45-degree angle against the gums. Move the brush head back and forth gently in short—about one tooth wide—strokes. First, brush the outer surfaces, then the inner surfaces and finally brush the chewing surfaces of the teeth. Use the end of the brush to brush the inside surfaces of the front teeth with a gentle up and down stroke. Make sure you brush your tongue to remove bacteria and freshen breath. But brushing alone doesn’t clean every surface of the teeth. Flossing is necessary to clean between the teeth and under the gums. A dentist may present special challenges to maintaining good dental hygiene. You’ll be told your dentist if you are using the topical dent.

Using a Disclosing Agent
Careful elimination of plaque includes the use of a disclosing agent, or mouthwash that will reveal any plaque that is left after brushing and flossing. If the plaque cannot be removed first, only additional brushing, use a rubber or dental floss or to remove tooth plaque. Water picks are also effective to remove food particles and plaque from hard-to-reach areas. Water picks can also be used to massage the gums where the teeth and gums meet. To avoid irritating the gums, make sure you do not direct the water stream below the point where the teeth and gums meet.

Visit the dentist regularly
A regular regular dental check-up is every 6 to 12 months. Make sure you communicate effectively with the dentist about all aspects of your medical condition. Your dentist will monitor the development of teeth, status of gums and treat problems such as teeth growing out of alignment. It is important because teeth that are out of alignment collect food particles more easily, making it difficult to clean them and remove plaque buildup.

In any dental situation where medications have been prescribed includingImage links and if you take any interactions with other drugs. It is important to follow the dentist after brushing and flossing or other medications might be needed.