

MELBOURNE NEUROSURGERY

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EPILIM

WHAT IS THE DRUGS GENERIC(PHARMACISTS) NAME ?

Sodium Valproate

WHAT IS THE DRUG USED FOR ?

The treatment of epilepsy(seizures). It is particularly good for petit mal seizures as well as the major seizures. It is less sedating than some of the other anti epileptics

HOW DOES THE DRUG WORK ?

The primary action in the treatment of epilepsy is to prevent the spread of seizure activity in the motor part of the brain. It does this by increasing the content in the brain of a substance(GABA) that inhibits signal transmission in the brains neurons

HOW LONG BEFORE IT WORKS ?

This depends on lots of factors but the drug does not reach a stable concentration in the body till about 3 days and it may take a week or so to get the dose correct.

HOW DO WE KNOW THAT YOU ARE GETTING ENOUGH ?

We will do blood levels on a regular basis to check that you are getting enough and not too much. The first level is usually done at about one week.

CAN I CHANGE MY DOSE ?

This may be possible but you should not change your dose unless instructed by your doctor or if you develop a possible side effect. In which case you should immediately stop the medication while contacting your doctor. Stopping abruptly can cause a seizure.

WHAT ARE THE TABLET STRENGTHS AND WHAT SHOULD MY TABLETS LOOK LIKE ?

100 mg white tablet scored(no pic)
200 mg/500 mg lilac coated



200 mg 500 mg

HOW MUCH/HOW LONG AND WHEN DO I TAKE IT?

This is decided by your doctor but you are usually started on 300mg twice daily with or after food. After your blood level the dose may be changed. Usually we need about 1000mg per day. The dose is increased by about 200 mg per day till we get to the correct blood level.

WHAT DRUGS INTERACT WITH EPILIM ?

There are many drugs that can increase or decrease the blood levels, once you are stable if you change any medication you should recheck your Epilim levels. Esp. alcohol/aspirin/anticoagulants

THIS LEAFLET IS AIMED AT PROVIDING SOME INFORMATION ABOUT THE DRUG PRESCRIBED BY YOUR DOCTOR. THIS MAY NOT PROVIDE THE LATEST INFORMATION AS DRUG INFORMATION IS CONSTANTLY CHANGING. IT AIMS TO PROVIDE ANSWERS TO THE MORE COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS.



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WHAT SHOULD I TELL THE DOCTOR BEFORE I TAKE THIS NEW MEDICATION ?

If you have had a reaction to this drug in the past.
If you are pregnant(or breast feeding) or planning a pregnancy.
Any medical conditions especially

kidney disease	Low blood pressure
heart Failure	Blood disorders
liver disease	Platelet abnormalities

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE SIDE EFFECTS

Allergic symptoms of breathlessness or rash.

Severe skin reaction/Hair loss

Blood disorders May reduce platelets/or stop sticking

May cause easy bruising

Liver Failure(Usually in first 3 months)Need blood tests to check !

Foetal abnormalities(3x risk)

Gastro symptoms (usually on starting treatment)

Overdose

Slurred speech

Drowsiness

Difficulty walking

WHAT DO I DO IF I THINK I HAVE A SIDE EFFECT

As a general rule contact your doctor immediately and do not take any medication while waiting. Some side effects are life threatening and if any of the below occur it is important to present to a hospital emergency immediately

Asthma/sudden shortness of breath or difficulty breathing.

Severe rash

Swelling of face /lips/hands/throat.

Any of the overdose symptoms

Easy Bruising

Abdominal pain Or JAUNDICE(Skin turning Yellow)

ALL DRUGS HAVE RISKS AND BENEFITS IF YOU HAVE ANY CONCERNS ABOUT TAKING ANY MEDICATION DISCUSS THIS WITH YOUR DOCTOR.

IT IS IMPORTANT TO CHECK WITH YOUR PHARMACIST ABOUT THE DRUGS YOU ARE TAKING AND ANY AFFECTS THAT IT MAY HAVE ON OTHER DRUGS THAT YOU ARE TAKING AND ALSO THE EFFECTS OTHER DRUGS WILL HAVE ON YOUR NEW DRUGS.