

Parent and Carer's Information Leaflet

Gabapentin

(also called Neurontin)

For further advice:

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CEWT website

www.cewt.org.uk

Epilepsy Action Website:

www.epilepsy.org.uk

Gabapentin (also called Neurontin)

Gabapentin is a medicine or drug that is used in epilepsy generally to control a focal or partial seizures or convulsions (fits).

It is also used to treat pain, e.g. neuralgia, headaches and some psychiatric symptoms.

Gabapentin is available as tablets or capsules, 100mg (white or grey capsules); 300mg (yellow or orange capsules); 400mg (orange or brown capsules); 600mg (white tablet); 800mg (white tablet) of Gabapentin. Is there a solution?

How do I use it?

- Gabapentin is usually given three times a day, once in the morning, once between 12 noon and 4.00 pm. and once between 7.00 pm. and 9.00 pm..
- The capsules may be swallowed whole rather than chewed as the drug has a bitter taste; although some children don't mind the taste, most do.
- If your child has difficulty swallowing a capsule, then the capsule can be opened and the contents taken with some juice (blackcurrant or orange) or with some jam. If taken in a drink mix well throughout the drink.
- If a dose of the medicine is forgotten and you remember up to four hours after missing the dose, give the forgotten dose when you can. If you remember only at or near the time the next dose is due, just give your child the usual dose. **Do not** give any extra Gabapentin.
- If your child vomits within 15 minutes of taking a dose then give the dose again; if your child vomits after 15 minutes after taking the dose, **do not** give it again.

The dosage will be increased gradually. Gabapentin is at the correct dosage when your child is free of seizures or convulsions (fits) and has no side effects. There is no need to measure the level of medicine in

blood. Follow the dose plan worked out by your doctor.

If your child has been taking the medicine regularly **do not stop it suddenly** as this could bring on a fit or convulsion.

Keep a seizure diary if you can and remember to always bring all the medicines with you to clinic appointments.

Use with other medicines?

Paracetamol (Calpol), antibiotics and most other medicines or drugs can be safely taken with Gabapentin. It should not be taken at the same time as antacids e.g. Gaviscon.

It does not interact or reduce the effect of the Oral Contraceptive Pill. Always let your doctor know if starting new medicine.

What are the common side-effects?

Very few side effects have been reported with Gabapentin and most of these are minor and not dangerous.

1. Drowsiness or sleepiness. This is not common and usually only occurs as the medicine is being started. If sleepiness lasts more than a few days then you should contact your Doctor (hospital or GP) or specialist nurse.
2. Headache and irritability, mood or behaviour change, agitation, apprehension are rarely reported.
3. Dizziness; this is uncommon and usually only happens as the Gabapentin is being started. If it lasts longer than 2 or 3 days you should consult your Doctor (hospital or GP) or specialist nurse.
4. Weight gain, nausea and vomiting are rarely reported

If your child suffers any other side effects not listed above please consult your doctor. For further information please refer to the manufacturer's instructions.