

PHENOBARBITONE

Other names: Phenobarbitone PSM®



Important note: The following information is intended to add to, not replace, the knowledge and judgment of your doctor, pharmacist or other health care professional.

Why you are taking this medicine?

Phenobarbitone belongs to a group of medicines called barbiturates. It is used to control and prevent fits or seizures in epilepsy by reducing the activity in the brain or increasing the brain's seizure level to stimuli.

When to take this medicine

Phenobarbitone is usually taken on an empty stomach. Phenobarbitone should be taken at the same times each day to avoid missing any doses.

DO NOT STOP taking it without your doctor's permission. You may need to reduce the dose before stopping completely.

If you miss a dose

Take your dose as soon as possible except when it is close to the time for your next dose. If it is almost time for next dose, skip the missed dose and return to your regular dosing schedule. You should not take two doses at the same time.

Side Effects

Unfortunately as well as having good effects, most medicines have some effects on your body that are unwanted. These are called *side effects*.

Call your doctor **immediately** if you have any of these side effects:

- severe drowsiness, confusion, hallucinations or slurred speech
- shortness of breath or trouble breathing
- severe skin rash, itching or hives
- wheezing or difficulty breathing
- swelling of eyelids or face
- uncontrollable eye movements
- yellowing of eyes or skin
- sore throat, fever or chills

Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you have these side effects:

- drowsiness, dizziness, unsteadiness, "hangover" effects, trouble concentrating
- mood changes
- nausea, vomiting

- constipation
- irritability, nervousness or excitement

This list of side effects is **not** complete. Tell your doctor or pharmacist if any of these side effects are of a concern to you.

Other Medicines

Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you are taking any other medicine including herbal or complementary products and medicines you can buy without a prescription.

Medicines that can interact with phenobarbitone are:

- alcohol – will make you feel drowsy (limit alcohol intake)
- sedatives/hypnotics (e.g. temazepam, triazolam, diazepam) – avoid if possible as they can make you sleepy
- antibiotic (e.g. doxycycline) – can reduce the effectiveness of the antibiotic
- anticoagulants (e.g. warfarin) – can reduce the effectiveness of warfarin
- anticonvulsants (e.g. carbamazepine, phenytoin, sodium valproate) – careful monitoring is required when using this group of medicines
- antidepressants (e.g. amitriptyline, nortriptyline) – phenobarbitone can reduce the effectiveness of the antidepressant
- oral contraceptive pill - may not work if taken with phenobarbitone. Another form of contraception will need to be considered when taking this medicine. Discuss this with your doctor or pharmacist.

As phenobarbitone can cause drowsiness, be careful when driving or operating machinery.

Storage

Keep all medicines out of reach of children.

Read this leaflet and discuss any questions you have about your medicines with your doctor or pharmacist.