

SODIUM VALPROATE

Other names: Epilim®



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 are you taking this medicine

Epilepsy is caused by abnormal discharges from the nerve cells in the brain. Sodium valproate helps to stabilise this activity and prevent seizures (fits) in most types of epilepsy. For the treatment of epilepsy it can be used on its own or in combination with other antiepileptic drugs.

Sodium valproate can also be used to treat a number of other conditions, for example:

- some mood disorders (e.g. mania, bipolar disorder)
- hiccups
- nerve pain

When to take this medicine

Take sodium valproate at the same time(s) each day with food. The uncoated 100mg tablets may be crushed or chewed and swallowed with a glass of water.

The enteric coated 200mg and 500mg tablets should be swallowed whole. Do not crush, break or chew them.

Take the exact dose as directed by your doctor or pharmacist and never give more than the prescribed dose.

DO NOT STOP taking sodium valproate or change the dose without your doctor's permission.

Pregnancy

If you are planning to become pregnant make sure you talk to your doctor first.

If you miss a dose

Take as soon as possible except when it is close to the time for the next dose. If it is almost time for the next dose, skip the missed dose and return to the regular dosing schedule. You should not give 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 your child has any of these side effects:

- more frequent or severe seizures (fits)
- severe weakness or dizziness
- fever, chills, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose and body aches
- severe vomiting or severe pain in the abdomen
- any unexplained bleeding or bruising
- yellowing of the skin and eyes (jaundice)
- mood changes, unusual thoughts or memory loss
- rash or hives with itching
- tremors

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

- changes in appetite
- changes in your weight
- unsteadiness when waking, dizziness or light-headedness
- diarrhoea, constipation or upset stomach
- headache
- feeling tired or drowsy
- trouble sleeping

Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you notice any other side effect(s) from your medicine that are not mentioned here.

As sodium valproate can make some people feel drowsy or light headed, it is important to make sure you know how your body reacts to sodium valproate before you drive a car, operate machinery or ride a bike.

Other Medication

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.

Avoid drinking alcohol when taking sodium valproate.

Check with you doctor or pharmacist before taking sodium valproate with other medicines, for example:

- medicines that effect blood clotting (e.g. aspirin, clopidogrel, dabigatran, ticagrelor, warfarin)
- medicines that can make you drowsy (e.g. sleeping medicine – zopiclone, temazepam; strong pain relievers – codeine, morphine; antihistamines – chlorpheniramine)

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.