

Medication Information

Valproate Sodium

(Val – pro – ate So – dee – um)

Other names for this medication

Valproic Acid – Depakene
Divalproex Sodium – Epival

There are many other names for this medication.

How this medication is used

This medication is used:

- to control or prevent seizures
- to balance mood

This medication may also be used to treat other conditions. Talk to your doctor or health care provider if you are not sure why you are taking this medication.

It may take up to 4 to 6 weeks to begin working fully.

If you are pregnant or thinking about getting pregnant, talk to your doctor about the risks and benefits of taking this medication.

How to take this medication

Take this medication exactly as directed by your doctor. It must be taken regularly, even if you feel well.

It is important that you see your doctor regularly while taking this medication.

Do not stop taking this medication without checking with your doctor first.

If you miss a dose of this medication, take it as soon as possible. However, if it is almost time for the next dose, skip the missed dose and go back to your regular time. Do not take 2 doses at one time.

Tell all your doctors that you are taking this medication. Tell your doctor and pharmacist about all the medications you take, even the ones you buy without a prescription.

Capsules and enteric coated tablets:

Swallow whole with a glass of water.

Liquid:

Shake the bottle well before pouring each dose. Follow with a glass of water. Do not follow or mix with carbonated drinks such as pop or soda.

While taking this medication you may notice

- drowsiness or dizziness
- diarrhea
- headache
- nausea and vomiting
- upset stomach, mild cramps or abdominal pain
- change in menstrual cycle
- weight gain
- change in hair texture or mild hair loss

While taking this medication you may notice (continued)

To avoid feeling dizzy, get up slowly when you have been sitting or lying down. If you feel dizzy, sit or lie down until you are no longer dizzy, then get up slowly.

To avoid stomach upset, take this medication with a meal or snack.

This medication increases the effects of alcohol, making you more sleepy, dizzy and lightheaded. Do not drink alcohol such as wine, beer or liquor while on this medication.

To avoid weight gain, follow a healthy diet and exercise plan. Talk to your doctor or dietitian for help.

Contact your doctor if you notice

- change in coordination
- mood or mental changes
- confusion
- severe stomach pains
- increased number of seizures
- muscle weakness or feeling very tired
- loss of appetite or severe vomiting
- bruising or bleeding
- shaking
- skin rash
- yellowing of the skin or eyes
- dark coloured urine

Contact your pharmacist if you have any questions about your medication.