

LAMOTRIGINE



Other names

Lamictal

Drug category

Broad-spectrum; sodium channel blocker

Uses

Lamotrigine is used for any type of epilepsy and bipolar disorder. It has also been tried for headache types such as trigeminal neuralgia and SUNCT.

Available forms

Tablet, dispersible tablet (dissolves in water)

Some potential side-effects (inform your doctor if you think you have a serious side-effect)

Nausea, dizziness, unsteadiness, double vision, diarrhoea, insomnia

Rare: Severe blistering life-threatening rash, HLH (in first few weeks & if increased quickly)

May worsen myoclonic seizures or Parkinson's disease

Do not use if:

Brugada syndrome

Severe liver disease (reduce dose by 75%), renal failure (check drug level)

Contraception, pregnancy and breastfeeding

Hormone-based contraception will decrease the effect of lamotrigine, so the dose may need to be higher. Lamotrigine may make hormone-based contraception less likely to work but this is not clear yet. Should avoid in pregnancy as increased risk of birth defects (2-4%). It is thought to be safe during breastfeeding.

Interactions with other drugs

Sodium valproate increases lamotrigine levels by 100%. Carbamazepine, phenytoin, primidone, rifampicin, lopinavir, ritonavir decrease level by 50%. Avoid desmopressin.

Monitoring

Drug levels can be checked, especially if contraception is started or in pregnancy or with sodium valproate

How to use it (even if restarting after more than 7 days without it)

Day	WITHOUT sodium valproate/Epilim		WITH sodium valproate/Epilim	
	Morning dose	Evening dose	Morning dose	Evening dose
Start date	Nil	25mg	Nil	25mg alternate days
2 weeks later	25mg	25mg	Nil	25mg daily
4 weeks later	25mg	50mg	25mg	25mg
6 weeks later	50mg	50mg	25mg	50mg
8 weeks later	50mg	75mg	50mg	50mg
10 weeks later	75mg	75mg	Continue 50mg twice a day and check drug levels	
12 weeks later	75mg	100mg		
14 weeks later	100mg twice a day and continue			

If the dose above does not help and you have no side-effects, then it can be increased to a higher dose, and this can be done by adding 50mg every 2 weeks, but the maximum dose should be no more than 350mg twice a day or 150mg twice a day if taking sodium valproate as well. If reducing it, do this in steps of 50mg every week until stopped.

This information is for guidance only. Always read the medicine information leaflet with any new medicine for full details.