

The content on the UpToDate website is not intended nor recommended as a substitute for medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. Always seek the advice of your own physician or other qualified health care professional regarding any medical questions or conditions. The use of UpToDate content is governed by the [UpToDate Terms of Use](#). ©2018 UpToDate, Inc. All rights reserved.

Gabapentin: Patient drug information Lexicomp®

Copyright 1978-2018 Lexicomp, Inc. All rights reserved.

(For additional information [see "Gabapentin: Drug information"](#) and [see "Gabapentin: Pediatric drug information"](#))

Brand Names: US Fanatrex FusePaq; Gralise; Gralise Starter; Neuraptine; Neurontin

Brand Names: Canada Neurontin

What is this drug used for?

- It is used to treat seizures.
- It is used to treat painful nerve diseases.
- It may be given to you for other reasons. Talk with the doctor.

What do I need to tell my doctor BEFORE I take this drug?

- If you have an allergy to gabapentin or any other part of this drug.
- If you are allergic to any drugs like this one, any other drugs, foods, or other substances. Tell your doctor about the allergy and what signs you had, like rash; hives; itching; shortness of breath; wheezing; cough; swelling of face, lips, tongue, or throat; or any other signs.
- If you have kidney disease or are on dialysis.

This is not a list of all drugs or health problems that interact with this drug.

Tell your doctor and pharmacist about all of your drugs (prescription or OTC, natural products, vitamins) and health problems. You must check to make sure that it is safe for you to take this drug with all of your drugs and health problems. Do not start, stop, or change the dose of any drug without checking with your doctor.

What are some things I need to know or do while I take this drug?

- Tell all of your health care providers that you take this drug. This includes your doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and dentists.

- Avoid driving and doing other tasks or actions that call for you to be alert until you see how this drug affects you.
- This drug may affect certain lab tests. Tell all of your health care providers and lab workers that you take this drug.
- Have blood work checked as you have been told by the doctor. Talk with the doctor.
- Talk with your doctor before you drink alcohol or use other drugs and natural products that slow your actions.
- This drug is not the same as gabapentin enacarbil (Horizant™). Do not use in its place. Talk with the doctor.
- A very bad and sometimes deadly reaction has happened with this drug. Most of the time, this reaction has signs like fever, rash, or swollen glands with problems in body organs like the liver, kidney, blood, heart, muscles and joints, or lungs. Talk with the doctor.
- Do not stop taking this drug all of a sudden without calling your doctor. You may have a greater risk of side effects. If you need to stop this drug, you will want to slowly stop it as ordered by your doctor.
- If you are 65 or older, use this drug with care. You could have more side effects.
- Use with care in children. Talk with the doctor.
- Tell your doctor if you are pregnant or plan on getting pregnant. You will need to talk about the benefits and risks of using this drug while you are pregnant.
- Tell your doctor if you are breast-feeding. You will need to talk about any risks to your baby.

What are some side effects that I need to call my doctor about right away?

WARNING/CAUTION: Even though it may be rare, some people may have very bad and sometimes deadly side effects when taking a drug. Tell your doctor or get medical help right away if you have any of the following signs or symptoms that may be related to a very bad side effect:

- Signs of an allergic reaction, like rash; hives; itching; red, swollen, blistered, or peeling skin with or without fever; wheezing; tightness in the chest or throat; trouble breathing, swallowing, or talking; unusual hoarseness; or swelling of the mouth, face, lips, tongue, or throat.
- Signs of liver problems like dark urine, feeling tired, not hungry, upset stomach or stomach pain, light-colored stools, throwing up, or yellow skin or eyes.
- Signs of kidney problems like unable to pass urine, change in how much urine is passed, blood in the urine, or a big weight gain.
- Memory problems or loss.
- Change in eyesight.
- Feeling confused.
- Shakiness.
- Shortness of breath, a big weight gain, or swelling in the arms or legs.
- Feeling very tired or weak.
- Not able to control eye movements.
- Twitching.
- If seizures are worse or not the same after starting this drug.
- Any unexplained bruising or bleeding.

- Swollen gland.
- Fever or chills.
- Sore throat.
- Muscle pain or weakness.
- Change in balance.
- Trouble speaking.
- Not able to focus.
- Very bad dizziness or passing out.
- Patients who take this drug may be at a greater risk of having thoughts or actions of suicide. The risk may be greater in people who have had these thoughts or actions in the past. Call the doctor right away if signs like low mood (depression), nervousness, restlessness, grouchiness, panic attacks, or changes in mood or actions are new or worse. Call the doctor right away if any thoughts or actions of suicide occur.

What are some other side effects of this drug?

All drugs may cause side effects. However, many people have no side effects or only have minor side effects. Call your doctor or get medical help if any of these side effects or any other side effects bother you or do not go away:

- Dizziness.
- Feeling sleepy.
- Upset stomach or throwing up.
- Loose stools (diarrhea).
- Dry mouth.
- Feeling tired or weak.

These are not all of the side effects that may occur. If you have questions about side effects, call your doctor. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects.

You may report side effects to your national health agency.

How is this drug best taken?

Use this drug as ordered by your doctor. Read all information given to you. Follow all instructions closely.

All products:

- Keep taking this drug as you have been told by your doctor or other health care provider, even if you feel well.
- To gain the most benefit, do not miss doses.
- Do not take antacids within 2 hours before or 2 hours after taking this drug.

Gralise:

- Take with the evening meal.
- Swallow whole. Do not chew, break, or crush.

All other products:

- Take with or without food. Take with food if it causes an upset stomach.

Capsule:

- Swallow whole with a full glass of water.

Tablet:

- You may break the tablet in half. Do not chew or crush.
- If you break the tablet in half, use the other half of the tablet for the next dose, as told by the doctor. Throw away half-tablets not used within 28 days.

Liquid (solution):

- Measure liquid doses carefully. Use the measuring device that comes with this drug. If there is none, ask the pharmacist for a device to measure this drug.

What do I do if I miss a dose?

- Take a missed dose as soon as you think about it.
- If it is close to the time for your next dose, skip the missed dose and go back to your normal time.
- Do not take 2 doses at the same time or extra doses.

How do I store and/or throw out this drug?

Liquid (solution):

- Store in a refrigerator. Do not freeze.

All other products:

- Store at room temperature.
- Store in a dry place. Do not store in a bathroom.

All dose forms:

- Keep all drugs in a safe place. Keep all drugs out of the reach of children and pets.
- Throw away unused or expired drugs. Do not flush down a toilet or pour down a drain unless you are told to do so. Check with your pharmacist if you have questions about the best way to throw out drugs. There may be drug take-back programs in your area.

General drug facts

- If your symptoms or health problems do not get better or if they become worse, call your doctor.
- Do not share your drugs with others and do not take anyone else's drugs.
- Keep a list of all your drugs (prescription, natural products, vitamins, OTC) with you. Give this list to your doctor.
- Talk with the doctor before starting any new drug, including prescription or OTC, natural products, or vitamins.
- Some drugs may have another patient information leaflet. If you have any questions about this drug, please talk with your doctor, nurse, pharmacist, or other health care provider.
- If you think there has been an overdose, call your poison control center or get medical care right away. Be ready to tell or show what was taken, how much, and when it happened.

Use of UpToDate is subject to the [Subscription and License Agreement](#).

Topic 12504 Version 205.0