

What are the precautions? (continued)

- It is important to let your doctor know if you have any kidney problems to reduce the chance of any unwanted effects when taking Gabapentin.
- If you ever had an allergic reaction to Gabapentin or have any allergies at all to any of the ingredients listed of the drug leaflet please inform your doctor before starting this medicine.
- If you are pregnant or breast-feeding please also discuss the risks and benefits of this medicine before starting it.

Please read this leaflet in conjunction with the information provided in the dispensed Gabapentin packs.

This leaflet is available in large print and other formats and languages.

**Contact: Administrator
Tel: 01752 792525**

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Plymouth Pain Management Centre

Gabapentin (600mg)

This information leaflet is designed to give you necessary information about this medicine. It will help you clearly understand why your doctor has prescribed it, benefits, possible side effects, how to take it and who to contact for more advice.

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What is Gabapentin and how does it work?

- Gabapentin is a drug used to control certain types of epilepsy. In addition to this it has been found to be beneficial for some types of chronic or neuropathic pain (nerve type pain). It is not known exactly how Gabapentin works but it possibly dampens excessive electrical activity in the brain and also has similar effects in the peripheral nerves. It received its licence for use in neuropathic pain at the beginning of April 2000.

How do I take it?

- The dose of Gabapentin will be different for different patients but please follow the doctor's orders on the label.
- Gabapentin should be taken with a glass of water and may be taken with or without food.
- It will be necessary to gradually increase the dose over several weeks and you may need to continue to take it before any benefit is noticed.
- When taking Gabapentin 3 times a day, do not allow more than 12 hours to pass between any 2 doses.

Gabapentin usually comes in capsules (100mg)

DAY	DOSE	Morning	Noon	Night
1	100mg	-	-	X 1 caps
2	200mg	X 1 caps	-	X 1 caps
3	300mg	X 1 caps	X 1 caps	X 1 caps
4	400mg	X 1caps	X 1 caps	X 2 caps
5	500mg	X 2 caps	X 1 caps	X 2 caps
6	600mg	X 2 caps	X 1 caps	X 2 caps
7	600mg	X 2 caps	X 1 caps	X 2 caps

What are the possible side effects?

- Gabapentin is usually well tolerated, however there are some common and less common side effects.
- Common side effects include dizziness, unsteadiness, sleepiness and blurred vision.
- Some patients may feel more tired than normal; suffer from visual side effects, nausea, weight gain or memory loss but these are usually minor.
- It is important to persevere with Gabapentin as some of these symptoms disappear after a few weeks.
- Should any side effects be intolerable as the dose is increased, it would be acceptable to reduce to the former dose that was tolerable for you. Do this rather than stopping the medication.
- Please always read the information leaflet provided in the dispensed pack of Gabapentin.

If you have any concerns or side effects that you are not sure of please contact the pain department or your GP for advice.

What are the precautions?

- Before starting this medicine it is important to let your doctor know what, if any other medicines you are taking.
- Avoid operating heavy machinery or driving a car if the medicine is making you feel at all drowsy.
- Gabapentin will add to the effects of alcohol and so please be careful if taking alcohol and Gabapentin together as you may become more drowsy than expected.
- Avoid taking Gabapentin at the same time as taking any **Antacid** medicines, for example Gaviscon. This may affect how much of the drug is absorbed by your body.
- There is an increase chance of side effects if Gabapentin is taken with other **Morphine** type painkillers. Smaller doses of either medicine may be needed.