

# iMedix: Your Personal Health Advisor.

## Vigabatrin

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Vigabatrin is a medication primarily used to treat epilepsy, specifically focusing on infantile spasms and refractory complex partial seizures in adults for whom other treatments have not been effective.

- **Active Ingredient:**
- **Dosage Form:**
- **Dosage:**
- **Indications:**
- **Manufacturer:**
- **Storage:**
- **Market Price:**
- **Drug Status:**

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## Description

Side Effects Drowsiness, dizziness, and difficulty concentrating may occur, especially during the first few days as your body adjusts to the medication. Children may become restless or excited. Nausea, vomiting, stomach upset, diarrhea, headache, weight gain, and tiredness may also occur. If any of these effects last or get worse, tell your doctor or pharmacist promptly. Remember that this medication has been prescribed because your doctor has judged that the benefit to you is greater than the risk of side effects. Many people using this medication do not have serious side effects. Tell your doctor right away if you have any serious side effects, including: shakiness (tremor), swelling ankles/feet, tingling/numbness, shortness of breath, fast heartbeat. A small number of people who take anticonvulsants for any condition (such as seizure, bipolar disorder, pain) may experience depression, suicidal thoughts/attempts, or other mental/mood problems. Tell your doctor right away if you or your family/caregiver notice any unusual/sudden changes in your mood, thoughts, or behavior including signs of depression, suicidal thoughts/attempts, thoughts about harming yourself. A very serious allergic reaction to this drug is rare. However, get medical help right away if you notice any symptoms of a serious allergic reaction, including: rash, itching/swelling (especially of the face/tongue/throat), severe dizziness, trouble breathing. This is not a complete list of possible side effects. If you notice other effects not listed above, contact your doctor or pharmacist. In the US – Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088 or at [www.fda.gov/medwatch](http://www.fda.gov/medwatch). In Canada – Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to Health Canada at 1-866-234-2345. How long does it take for this medicine to take effect? The onset of therapeutic effects of vigabatrin can vary among individuals. Clinical improvement in seizure control may be observed within a few days to weeks after initiating treatment. However, for some patients, it may take longer to observe significant benefits. Consistent medication adherence is crucial for optimal therapeutic outcomes. How long do the effects of this medicine last? Vigabatrin has a half-life of about 5 to 8 hours in adults, but the clinical effect of seizure control lasts longer due to its mechanism of action, which involves irreversible inhibition of GABA-T. The medication is typically administered twice daily to maintain steady-state levels and therapeutic efficacy. Is it safe to consume alcohol while taking this medicine? While there is no direct contraindication for the consumption of alcohol while taking vigabatrin, it is generally advisable to avoid or limit alcohol intake. Alcohol and vigabatrin both act on the central nervous system (CNS), and concurrent use could potentially exacerbate CNS side effects such as drowsiness, dizziness, and impaired coordination. Moreover, alcohol consumption can lower seizure threshold and may counteract the

benefits of seizure control achieved with vigabatrin. Is this a habit forming medicine? Vigabatrin does not have a known potential for abuse or dependence and is not considered to be habit-forming. It is a prescription medication used under medical supervision for the management of specific seizure disorders. Can this medicine be taken during pregnancy? Vigabatrin is classified as FDA Pregnancy Category C, which means that animal reproduction studies have shown an adverse effect on the fetus, and there are no adequate and well-controlled studies in humans. However, the potential benefits may warrant the use of vigabatrin in pregnant women despite potential risks. The decision to use vigabatrin during pregnancy should be made after carefully weighing the benefits against the risks, considering the potential for uncontrolled seizures to also harm both the mother and the fetus. Can this medicine be taken while breast-feeding? Vigabatrin is excreted into breast milk, but the effects on the nursing infant are not well documented. The decision to continue breastfeeding while taking vigabatrin should consider the importance of the medication to the mother's health and the potential risks to the nursing infant. Consultation with a healthcare provider is essential to make an informed decision regarding breastfeeding while on vigabatrin therapy. Uses This medication is used in combination with other medications to treat seizure disorders (epilepsy). Vigabatrin decreases the number of seizures in adults and children who have not been able to control their seizures with other treatment. Vigabatrin is an anticonvulsant. It is thought to work by stopping the breakdown of a natural calming substance (GABA) in the brain. How to use vigabatrin oral Read the Medication Guide provided by your pharmacist before you start taking vigabatrin and each time you get a refill. If you have any questions, ask your doctor or pharmacist. Take this medication by mouth with or without food as directed by your doctor, usually twice a day. The dosage is based on your medical condition and response to treatment. For children, the dosage is also based on their weight. Your doctor may direct you to take a low dose at first, gradually increasing the dose to lower the chance of side effects such as drowsiness and confusion. Your doctor will adjust your dose to find the best dose for you. Follow your doctor's directions carefully. Take this medication regularly to get the most benefit from it. To help you remember, take it at the same times each day. Do not increase your dose or take this medication more often than prescribed. Your condition will not improve any faster, and the risk of serious side effects may be increased. Do not stop taking this medication without consulting your doctor. Your seizures may become worse when the drug is suddenly stopped. Your dose may need to be gradually decreased. Tell your doctor if your seizures worsen or have not improved within 3 months. Warnings Serious vision problems may occur while taking this medication and may be permanent even after you stop taking the medication. To prevent vision problems from getting worse, your doctor must find any eye problems as early as possible. Also, tell your doctor if you have a history of vision problems. It is very important that you have an eye exam before or within 4 weeks of starting this medication, then every 3 months thereafter while you are taking this medication. You should also have an eye exam 3 to 6 months after stopping this medication. Follow your doctor's directions carefully and keep all medical/eye/lab appointments. Tell your doctor right away if you have any changes in vision (such as loss of vision, blurred vision, double vision, sensitivity to light, eye pain). To receive this medication in the United States, you must understand, agree to, and carefully follow the requirements of the Vigabatrin REMS Program. If you live in Canada or any other country, consult your doctor and pharmacist for your country's regulations. Interactions Drug interactions may change how your medications work or increase your risk for serious side effects. This document does not contain all possible drug interactions. Keep a list of all the products you use (including prescription/nonprescription drugs and herbal products) and share it with your doctor and pharmacist. Do not start, stop, or change the dosage of any medicines without your doctor's approval. Some products that may interact with this drug include: drugs that can harm the eye (retinotoxic drugs such as chloroquine, hydroxychloroquine, phenothiazines including thiordiazine), orlistat. Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you are taking other products that cause drowsiness including alcohol, marijuana (cannabis), antihistamines (such as cetirizine, diphenhydramine), drugs for sleep or anxiety (such as alprazolam, clonazepam, diazepam, zolpidem), muscle relaxants, and opioid pain relievers (such as codeine). Check the labels on all your medicines (such as allergy or cough-and-cold products) because they may contain ingredients that cause drowsiness. Ask your pharmacist about using those products safely. This medication may interfere with certain lab tests (such as liver function tests), possibly causing false test results. Make sure lab personnel and all your doctors know you use this drug. Precautions Before taking vigabatrin, tell your doctor or pharmacist if you are allergic to it; or if you have any other allergies. This product may contain inactive ingredients, which can cause allergic reactions or other problems. Talk to your

pharmacist for more details. Before using this medication, tell your doctor or pharmacist your medical history, especially of: eye problems (such as visual field defect, glaucoma, macular degeneration, optic nerve problem), mental/mood problems (such as depression, psychosis), kidney disease, low red blood cell count (anemia). This drug may make you dizzy or drowsy or cause vision problems. Alcohol or marijuana (cannabis) can make you more dizzy or drowsy. Do not drive, use machinery, or do anything that needs alertness or clear vision until you can do it safely. Avoid alcoholic beverages. Talk to your doctor if you are using marijuana (cannabis). MRI tests of the brain in infants have shown changes after they are given vigabatrin. It is not known if these changes are harmful. Consult your doctor for more details. If your infant is going to have an MRI test, notify testing personnel that your infant is using this medication. Before having surgery, tell your doctor or dentist about all the products you use (including prescription drugs, nonprescription drugs, and herbal products). Older adults may be at greater risk for side effects (such as confusion) while using this drug. Confusion can increase the risk of falling. Tell your doctor if you are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. You should not become pregnant while using vigabatrin. Vigabatrin may harm an unborn baby. Ask about reliable forms of birth control while using this medication. If you become pregnant, talk to your doctor right away about the risks and benefits of this medication. This medication passes into breast milk in small amounts. Consult your doctor before breast-feeding. Overdose If someone has overdosed and has serious symptoms such as passing out or trouble breathing, call 911. Otherwise, call a poison control center right away. US residents can call their local poison control center at 1-800-222-1222. Canada residents can call a provincial poison control center. Symptoms of overdose may include: slow/shallow breathing, loss of consciousness. Do not share this medication with others. Lab and/or medical tests (such as eye exams, kidney function, complete blood count) should be done while you are taking this medication. Keep all medical and lab appointments. Consult your doctor for more details. If you miss a dose, take it as soon as you remember. If it is near the time of the next dose, skip the missed dose. Take your next dose at the regular time. Do not double the dose to catch up. Store at room temperature away from light and moisture. Do not store in the bathroom. Keep all medications away from children and pets. Do not flush medications down the toilet or pour them into a drain unless instructed to do so. Properly discard this product when it is expired or no longer needed. Consult your pharmacist or local waste disposal company.

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## **Side Effects**

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## **Uses**

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## **Interactions**

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## Other Details

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