

# Ethosuximide

## Usage

Ethosuximide is an anti convulsant used to control seizures/fits. It is one of the “older” anticonvulsants and has been in use for many years. It must be prescribed by a doctor.

You should never give your child anyone else's medications.

Ethosuximide is among the most effective anti convulsant drugs used for the treatment of childhood absence epilepsy.

## Side Effects

**All medications have side effects. Not everyone will experience side effects. Below are some of the possible side effects your child may experience.**

- **Abdominal pain** - This is the main side effect and is often dose dependant. At times it can be intolerable and the drug may need to be stopped. Sometimes, if the medication is taken at the end of a meal, the side effects may decrease.
- **Nausea**
- **Vomiting**
- **Diarrhoea**
- **Headaches**
- **Hiccoughs (hiccups)**
- **Joint pain**
- **Drowsiness or lethargy**
  
- **Rash** - If your child develops a rash, there are important features to look for such as: your child may develop red eyes, red mouth, blisters around the mouth, nose and lips. If your child develops a rash or any of these signs please call your doctor immediately or go to the nearest Emergency Department. The drug needs to be stopped immediately under medical supervision.
  
- **Blood disorders** - low white cell count.

## Other possible side effects

- Bruising
- Irritability, depression and very rarely, psychosis
- Abnormal movements
- Weight loss
- Use with caution in children with liver or kidney problems.

## Can other medications be given with Ethosuximide?

Your Doctor will check and make sure that other drugs your child is taking are compatible with Ethosuximide.

## Epilepsy and Pregnancy

If a pregnancy is planned, a discussion with your neurologist is recommended.

Any issues related to child bearing please refer to the PENNSW website: [www.PENNSW.com.au](http://www.PENNSW.com.au).

## What else do I need to Know?

If you have any questions please ask your doctor.

## Monitoring and medication levels

There is no need to do regular blood monitoring with Ethosuximide. **Some** doctors may want to do a baseline blood test before starting the drug and infrequent subsequent tests of blood count and liver function.

The only other monitoring required is a seizure diary to see if there is a decrease in the number of seizures.