

Sodium Valproate

Usage

Sodium Valproate is an anti convulsant used to control seizures/fits. It is often used as a first line medicine to treat genetic generalised epilepsies and myoclonic seizure disorders in children. It must be prescribed by a doctor. You should never give your child anyone else's medications.

Side Effects

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

- Increased appetite
- Weight gain
- Abdominal pain / tummy pain
- Diarrhoea
- Nausea
- Drowsiness
- Lethargy
- Tremor
- Easy bruising
- Bleeding
- Headache
- Hair loss - usually mild
- Low platelet counts
- Menstrual disturbances

Other possible side effects

- Rarely serious liver dysfunction
- Rarely pancreatitis (inflammation of the pancreas)
- Bed wetting
- Polycystic ovaries
- Decreased bone density – bone softening
- Deterioration in thinking or intellectual abilities, memory impairment and behavioural changes

Can other medications be given with Sodium Valproate?

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

There are special precautions to take if Lamotrigine is added.

Epilepsy and Pregnancy

Sodium Valproate can have teratogenic effects on the unborn child. The higher the dosage the greater the risk. If a pregnancy is planned a discussion with your neurologist is mandatory. This is an important matter.

Any issues related to child bearing please refer to the PENNSW website:
www.PENNSW.com.au.

What else do I need to Know?

Sodium Valproate is usually not used if your child has a metabolic problem known as Mitochondrial disease or is suspected of having this disorder.

Monitoring and Levels

Often your doctor will do blood tests prior to starting Sodium Valproate and may recheck them 6 to 8 weeks after starting. However frequent blood monitoring is not indicated unless there is a specific need.