

CARBAMAZEPINE

TEGRETOL[®], APO-CARBAMAZEPINE[®], NEUROTOP[®]

Patient Information Leaflet

This leaflet answers some common questions about carbamazepine. It does not contain all the available information. It also does not take the place of talking to your doctor or pharmacist.

What is carbamazepine used for?

Carbamazepine is used to control seizures and other problems related to the nervous system.

When should I take the medication?

- Carbamazepine is usually taken 2 to 3 times daily. The doctor may start your child on a low dose and then slowly increase the dose. Follow the instructions on the label carefully and take your medicine regularly. Ask your pharmacist or doctor if you are unsure.
- Do not take this medication more often than directed and do not stop unless instructed by your doctor. Stopping this medicine too rapidly can increase the risk of seizures or fits.
- Do not change brands or dosage forms without informing your doctor.

How should it be taken?

- Oral liquid form / Suspension
Shake well before using. Use a medicine spoon or graduated syringe provided to measure your medicine. Do not use household spoons as they may not be accurate.
- Tablets
Swallow tablets whole with a glass of water.
- Extended-release tablets or capsules (e.g. Tegretol CR[®])
These tablets are specially designed to release the medicine slowly over a period of time. Swallow the tablets whole with a glass of water. The tablet could be cut into two and swallow one piece at a time if the whole tablet is too big to be swallowed. However, they should not be chewed or crushed.

What should I do if I miss a dose?

- Take the dose as soon as you remember and then continue to take it as you normally would. However, if it is almost time for the next dose, skip the dose you missed and take your next dose at the usual time.
- Do not double or increase the dose
- If your child has missed more than two doses or you are not sure of what to do, consult your doctor or pharmacist.
- If your child has less than two weeks medication supplies, please ensure that you have made an appointment with your child's neurologist or arranged to collect more medication.

What side effects can this medicine cause? What can I do about them?

Carbamazepine may cause some unwanted side effects. Generally, the common side effects tend to occur at the beginning of treatment. Such side effects may include:

- Drowsiness, dizziness and headache.
Be careful when giving any over-the-counter medicines to your child. Medicines for allergy or cold symptoms can add on to the drowsiness. Be sure to supervise your child when he/she is involved in activities such as cycling or swimming.
- Nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain (take medicine with meal to reduce these problems), loss of appetite, increased thirst, diarrhea or constipation
- Unusual behavioral changes such as confusion and agitation
- Back pain, muscle pain and weakness.

Inform your doctor if any of the above side effects lasts more than a few days or become severe and bothersome.

If your child experience excessive drowsiness and vomiting, doubled vision and unstable movement, please consult your child's neurologist as he/she may be too sensitive to carbamazepine and may need to adjust his/her dose.

Rare but serious side effects may sometimes occur. Contact your doctor as soon as possible, if you notice any of the following:

- Skin rash
- Prolonged fever, sore throat and mouth sores
- Easy bruising, rapid deteriorating illness
- Yellowing of the skin or eyes

Inform your doctor if you notice any other unusual symptoms in your child. Always discuss with your doctor or pharmacist if your child has any problems or difficulties during or after taking carbamazepine.

Special instructions:

Check with your doctor or pharmacist if you want to give any other medicines, supplements or herbal products to your child.

If your child is consulting with a different doctor, inform him/her that your child is currently taking carbamazepine before he/she prescribes any other medication.

If your child sees another doctor, inform him that your child is taking carbamazepine before he prescribes any other medications.

Caution: Antibiotic such as erythromycin, clarithromycin, azithromycin should not be taken with carbamazepine.

Consult your doctor or pharmacist (6394 1500 / 1501) if you need more information.

Patient information project of Pediatric Neurology Service and Pharmacy