

# Neurontin(R)

*Gabapentin*

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## Consumer Medicine Information

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### What is in this leaflet

This leaflet answers some common questions about Neurontin.

It does not contain all the available information.

It does not take the place of talking to your doctor or pharmacist.

All medicines have risks and benefits. Your doctor has weighed the risks of you taking Neurontin against the benefits they expect it will have for you.

**If you have any concerns about taking this medicine, ask your doctor or pharmacist.**

**Keep this leaflet with the medicine.**

You may need to read it again.

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### What Neurontin is used for

Neurontin is used to control epilepsy. Epilepsy is a condition where you have repeated seizures (fits). There are many different types of seizures, ranging from mild to severe.

Neurontin is also used to treat neuropathic pain, a type of pain caused by damage to the nerves.

Neurontin belongs to a group of medicines called anticonvulsants. These drugs are thought to work by controlling brain chemicals which send signals to nerves to help control seizures or neuropathic pain.

Neurontin also has analgesic effects.

Your doctor may prescribe Neurontin in addition to your current therapy

when your current treatment is no longer working as well.

**Ask your doctor if you have any questions about why Neurontin has been prescribed for you.**

Your doctor may have prescribed Neurontin for another reason.

There is no evidence that Neurontin is addictive.

This medicine is available only with a doctor's prescription.

Neurontin is not recommended for use in children under the age of:

- \* 3 years to control epilepsy
- \* 18 years for the treatment of neuropathic pain.

The safety and effectiveness of Neurontin in these age groups have not been established.

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### Before you take Neurontin

#### ***When you must not take it***

**Do not take Neurontin if you have an allergy to gabapentin, the active ingredient in Neurontin, or any of the ingredients listed at the end of this leaflet.**

Symptoms of an allergic reaction may include:

- \* shortness of breath, wheezing or difficulty breathing
- \* swelling of the face, lips, tongue or other parts of the body
- \* rash, itching or hives on the skin.

**Do not take Neurontin after the expiry date (EXP) printed on the pack.**

**Do not take Neurontin if the packaging is torn or shows signs of tampering.**

If it has expired or is damaged, return it to your pharmacist for disposal.

If you are not sure whether you should start taking Neurontin, talk to your doctor or pharmacist.

#### ***Before you start to take it***

**Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you have allergies to:**

- \* any other medicines, especially any other anticonvulsant medicines
- \* any other substances, such as foods, preservatives or dyes.

**Tell your doctor if you have or have had any medical conditions, especially the following:**

- \* kidney problems
- \* mixed seizure disorders that include absence seizures.

Your doctor may want to take special care if you have any of these conditions.

**Tell your doctor if you are pregnant or intend to become pregnant.**

Neurontin may affect your developing baby if you take it during pregnancy. However, it is very important to control your fits while you are pregnant. If it is necessary for you to take Neurontin, your doctor can help you decide whether or not to take it during pregnancy.

**Tell your doctor if you are breast-feeding or plan to breast-feed.**

Your doctor will discuss the possible risks and benefits of using Neurontin during breastfeeding.

**If you do breastfeed, watch your baby carefully.**

If your baby develops a skin rash, becomes sleepy or has unusual symptoms, see your doctor as soon as possible and don't breastfeed again until advised by your doctor.

**If you have not told your doctor or pharmacist about any of the above, tell them before you start taking Neurontin.**

### ***Taking other medicines***

**Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you are taking any other medicines, including any that you buy without a prescription from your pharmacy, supermarket or health food shop.**

Some medicines and Neurontin may interfere with each other. These include:

- \* cimetidine, a medicine used to treat stomach or duodenal ulcers
- \* antacids, medicines used to treat heartburn or reflux
- \* morphine, a medicine used to treat severe pain.

These medicines may be affected by Neurontin, or may affect how well it works. You may need different amounts of your medicine, or you may need to take different medicines. Your doctor or pharmacist will advise you.

Your doctor and pharmacist may have more information on medicines to be careful with or avoid while taking Neurontin.

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## **How to take Neurontin**

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### ***How much to take***

Your doctor will tell you how many capsules/tablets you will need to take each day. This may depend on your age, your condition and whether or

not you are taking any other medicines.

Your doctor may recommend that you start with a low dose of Neurontin and slowly increase the dose to the lowest amount needed to control your condition.

**Follow all directions given to you by your doctor carefully.**

They may differ from the information contained in this leaflet.

**If you do not understand the instructions on the box, ask your doctor or pharmacist for help.**

### ***How to take it***

**Swallow Neurontin whole with a full glass of water.**

Neurontin 600 mg tablets can be divided in half along the breakline, if advised by your doctor or pharmacist.

### ***When to take it***

**Take Neurontin at about the same time each day.**

Taking Neurontin at the same time each day will have the best effect. It will also help you remember when to take it.

If you are taking Neurontin three times a day, do not allow more than 12 hours between doses.

It does not matter if you take Neurontin before or after food.

### ***If you forget to take it***

**If it is almost time for your next dose (within 4 hours), skip the dose you missed and take your next dose when you are meant to.**

**Otherwise, take it as soon as you remember, and then go back to taking your medicine as you would normally.**

**Do not take a double dose to make up for the dose that you missed.**

This may increase the chance of you getting an unwanted side effect.

**If you are not sure what to do, ask your doctor or pharmacist.**

**If you have trouble remembering to take your medicine, ask your pharmacist for some hints.**

### ***How long to take it***

**Continue taking Neurontin for as long as your doctor tells you to.**

Neurontin helps control your condition, but does not cure it. Therefore you must take your medicine every day, even if you feel well.

**Do not stop taking Neurontin unless your doctor tells you to.**

### ***If you take too much (overdose)***

**Immediately telephone your Australian Poisons Information Centre (telephone 13 11 26) or the New Zealand National Poisons Information Centre (telephone 0800 POISON or 0800 764 766) or go to Accident and Emergency at your nearest hospital, if you think that you or anyone else may have taken too much Neurontin. Do this even if there are no signs of discomfort or poisoning.**

You may need urgent medical attention.

If you take too much Neurontin, you may feel drowsy, weak, unsteady when walking, have double vision, slurred speech or diarrhoea.

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## **While you are taking Neurontin**

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### ***Things you must do***

**Tell any other doctors, dentists, and pharmacists who are treating you that you are taking Neurontin.**

**If you are about to be started on any new medicine, tell your doctor, dentist or pharmacist that you are taking Neurontin.**

**Tell your doctor immediately if you have any thoughts of suicide or self-harm, any unusual changes in mood or behaviour, or show signs of depression.**

Some people being treated with anti-epileptics such as Neurontin have had thoughts of harming or killing themselves.

**Patients and caregivers should be alert and monitor for these effects.**

**Signs and symptoms of suicide include:**

- \* thoughts or talk of death or suicide
- \* thoughts or talk of self-harm or harm to others
- \* any recent attempts of self-harm
- \* new or an increase in aggressive behaviour, irritability or agitation
- \* new or worsening of depression.

Mention of suicide or violence must be taken seriously.

**If you or someone you know is demonstrating these warning signs of suicide while taking Neurontin, contact your doctor or a mental health professional right away.**

**Before you have any surgery or emergency treatment, tell your doctor or dentist that you are taking Neurontin.**

**If you need to have any medical tests while you are taking Neurontin, tell your doctor.**

Neurontin may affect the results of some tests.

**Tell your doctor if you feel Neurontin is not helping your condition.**

Your doctor may need to change your medicine.

**Tell your doctor if, for any reason, you have not taken Neurontin exactly as prescribed.**

Otherwise, your doctor may change your treatment unnecessarily.

**If you become pregnant while taking Neurontin, tell your doctor.**

**Be sure to keep all of your doctor's appointments so that your progress can be checked.**

Your doctor will check your progress and may want to take some tests from time to time. This helps to prevent unwanted side effects.

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## Things you must not do

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**Do not give Neurontin to anyone else, even if their symptoms seem similar to yours or they have the same condition as you.**

**Do not take Neurontin to treat any other complaints unless your doctor tells you to.**

**Do not stop taking Neurontin, or lower the dosage, without checking with your doctor. Do not let yourself run out of medicine over the weekend or on holidays.**

Stopping Neurontin suddenly, if you have epilepsy, may cause unwanted effects or make your condition worse. Your doctor will slowly reduce your dose before you can stop taking it completely.

### **Things to be careful of**

**Be careful driving or operating machinery until you know how Neurontin affects you.**

As with other anticonvulsant medicines, Neurontin may cause dizziness, light-headedness, tiredness and drowsiness in some people.

Make sure you know how you react to Neurontin before you drive a car, operate machinery, or do anything else that could be dangerous if you are dizzy or light-headed. If this occurs do not drive. If you drink alcohol, dizziness or light-headedness may be worse.

**Children should not ride a bike, climb trees or do anything else that could be dangerous if they are feeling drowsy or sleepy.**

Neurontin may cause drowsiness, dizziness or sleepiness in some people and affect alertness.

**Be careful when drinking alcohol while taking Neurontin.**

Combining Neurontin and alcohol can make you more sleepy, dizzy or light-headed. Your doctor may suggest you avoid alcohol while you are being treated with Neurontin.

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## Side effects

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**Tell your doctor or pharmacist as soon as possible if you do not feel well while you are taking Neurontin.**

Neurontin helps most people with epilepsy or neuropathic pain, but it may have unwanted side effects in a few people. All medicines can have side effects. Sometimes they are serious, most of the time they are not. You may need medical treatment if you get some of the side effects. If you are over 65 years of age you may have an increased chance of getting side effects.

**Ask your doctor or pharmacist to answer any questions you may have.**

**If you get any side effects, do not stop taking Neurontin without first talking to your doctor or pharmacist.**

**Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you notice any of the following and they worry you:**

- \* dizziness\* or light-headedness
- \* feeling tired or drowsy\*
- \* unfriendliness\*
- \* unusually overactive\*
- \* forgetfulness, loss of concentration or confusion
- \* difficulty speaking
- \* changes in your weight\*
- \* constipation, diarrhoea
- \* nausea and/or vomiting\*, indigestion
- \* dry mouth, red swollen gums
- \* muscle pain or cramps, back pain
- \* swelling of the hands or feet
- \* runny or blocked nose
- \* fever\*

- \* bronchitis\*, lung infection\*
- \* sore throat and discomfort when swallowing, coughing.

**Tell your doctor as soon as possible if you notice any of the following:**

- \* weakness, unsteadiness when walking, reduced co-ordination or slowed reactions
- \* unusual changes in mood\* or behaviour such as restlessness, nervousness, or excitement
- \* signs of new or increased irritability or agitation
- \* signs of depression
- \* seeing or hearing things that are not there, irrational thinking
- \* blurred or double vision, uncontrollable jerky eye movements, difficulty seeing
- \* signs of frequent infections such as fever, severe chills, sore throat or mouth ulcers.

The side effects in the above lists marked \* have been specifically reported in children taking Neurontin.

**Tell your doctor immediately or go to Accident and Emergency at your nearest hospital if you notice any of the following:**

- \* more frequent or more severe seizures (fits)
- \* chest pain, a very fast heart rate
- \* sudden signs of allergy such as rash, itching or hives, swelling of the face, lips, tongue or other parts of the body, shortness of breath, wheezing or difficulty breathing.

These are very serious side effects. You may need urgent medical attention or hospitalisation.

All of these side effects are very rare.

**Tell your doctor if you notice anything else that is making you feel unwell.**

Other side effects not listed above may happen in some people. Some of these side effects (for example, changes in liver function) can only be found when your doctor does blood tests from time to time to check your progress.

**Do not be alarmed by this list of possible side effects.**

You may not experience any of them.

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## After taking Neurontin

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### Storage

**Keep your capsules/tablets in the pack until it is time to take them.**

If you take the capsules/tablets out of the pack they will not keep well.

**Keep your capsules in a cool dry place where the temperature stays below 30 degrees C.**

**Keep your tablets in a cool dry place where the temperature stays below 25 degrees C.**

**Do not store Neurontin or any other medicine in the bathroom or near a sink.**

**Do not leave it on a window sill or in the car on hot days.**

Heat and dampness can destroy some medicines.

**Keep it where children cannot reach it.**

A locked cupboard at least one-and-a-half metres above the ground is a good place to store medicines.

### Disposal

**If your doctor or pharmacist tells you to stop taking Neurontin or the capsules/tablets have passed their expiry date, ask your pharmacist what to do with any that are left over.**

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## Product description

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### What it looks like

Neurontin is available in 5 strengths as either capsules or tablets.

### Capsules

100 mg - White capsule, marked Neurontin 100 mg, PD

300 mg - Yellow capsule, marked Neurontin 300 mg, PD

400 mg - Orange capsule, marked Neurontin 400 mg, PD

### Tablets

600 mg - White, elliptical, film-coated tablet, with bisecting score on both sides and debossed with "NT" and "16" on one side.

800 mg - White, elliptical, film-coated tablet, marked "Neurontin 800" (not marketed in New Zealand).

Each pack contains 100 capsules/tablets.

### Ingredients

#### Active ingredient

- \* Neurontin 100 mg - 100 mg gabapentin
- \* Neurontin 300 mg - 300 mg gabapentin
- \* Neurontin 400 mg - 400 mg gabapentin
- \* Neurontin 600 mg - 600 mg gabapentin
- \* Neurontin 800 mg - 800 mg gabapentin.

#### Other capsule ingredients:

- \* lactose
- \* talc-purified
- \* starch maize
- \* gelatin
- \* titanium dioxide
- \* Opacode Blue S-1-4118
- \* iron oxide - yellow (300 mg / 400 mg)
- \* iron oxide - red (400 mg).

#### Other tablet ingredients:

- \* poloxamer
- \* copovidone
- \* starch-maize
- \* magnesium stearate
- \* candelilla wax
- \* Opadry White YS-1-18111

- \* Opacode WB monogramming ink NS-78-13026 orange (800 mg tablet only)
- \* Neurontin does not contain sucrose, gluten, tartrazine or any other azo dyes.

### **Supplier**

Neurontin is supplied in Australia by:

Pfizer Australia Pty Ltd  
ABN 50 008 422 348  
38-42 Wharf Road  
West Ryde NSW 2114  
Australia  
Toll Free Number: 1800 675 229

Neurontin is supplied in New Zealand by:

Pfizer New Zealand Ltd  
PO Box 3998  
Auckland  
New Zealand  
Toll Free Number: 0800 736 363

### **Australian Registration Numbers:**

100 mg capsules: AUST R 74067  
300 mg capsules: AUST R 66008  
400 mg capsules: AUST R 66005  
600 mg tablets: AUST R 71793  
800 mg tablets: AUST R 71791

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