

Chemmart® Gabapentin

Gabapentin (gab-a-PEN-tin)

Consumer Medicine Information

What is in this leaflet

This leaflet answers some common questions about Chemmart Gabapentin. 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 to you of taking gabapentin against the benefits it is expected to 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.

What Chemmart Gabapentin is used for

This medicine is used to treat:

- epilepsy, a condition that causes repeated seizures (fits). There are many different types of seizures, ranging from mild to severe
- neuropathic pain (pain due to nerves being damaged or affected).

This medicine belongs to a group of medicines called anticonvulsants.

It is thought to work by controlling brain chemicals which send signals to nerves so that seizures do not happen.

This medicine also has analgesic effects.

Ask your doctor if you have any questions about why this medicine has been prescribed for you.

Your doctor may have prescribed it for another reason.

This medicine is not addictive.

It is available only with a doctor's prescription.

There is not enough information to recommend the use of this medicine for children under the age of 3 years to control epilepsy, or for children under the age of 18 years for neuropathic pain.

Before you take Chemmart Gabapentin

When you must not take it

Do not take gabapentin if you have an allergy to:

- any medicine containing gabapentin
- any of the ingredients listed at the end of this leaflet.

Some of the 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 this medicine after the expiry date printed on the pack or 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 this medicine, talk to your doctor.

Before you start to take it

Tell your doctor if you have allergies to any other medicines, foods, preservatives or dyes.

Tell your doctor if you have or have had any of the following medical conditions:

- kidney problems

- a particular type of seizure known as an absence seizure, or mixed seizure disorders.

Tell your doctor if you are pregnant or intended to become pregnant.

Gabapentin 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 this medicine, 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 this medicine during breast-feeding. If you do breast-feed, watch your baby carefully. If your baby develops a skin rash or has unusual symptoms, don't breast-feed again until you speak to your doctor.

If you have not told your doctor about any of the above, tell him/her before you start taking gabapentin.

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 gabapentin may interfere with each other. These include:

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

These medicines may be affected by gabapentin, 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 may have more information on medicines to be careful with or avoid while taking this medicine.

How to take Chemmart Gabapentin

Follow all directions given to you by your doctor or pharmacist 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 much to take

Your doctor will tell you how many capsules 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 gabapentin and slowly increase the dose to the lowest amount needed to control your epilepsy or neuropathic pain.

How to take it

Swallow gabapentin capsules whole with a full glass of water.

When to take it

Take your medicine at about the same time each day.

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

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

If you need to take an antacid, take it at least 2 hours before or 2 hours after your dose of gabapentin.

How long to take it

Continue taking your medicine for as long as your doctor tells you.

This medicine helps control your condition, but does not cure it. It is important to keep taking your medicine even if you feel well.

If you forget to take it

If you have missed a dose by more than 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.

If you take too much (overdose)

Immediately telephone your doctor or the Poisons Information Centre (telephone 13 11 26) for advice, or go to the Accident and Emergency at the nearest hospital, if you think that you or anyone else may have taken too much gabapentin. Do this even if there are no signs of discomfort or poisoning.

You may need urgent medical attention.

Symptoms of an overdose may include double vision, slurred speech, drowsiness, lethargy, unsteadiness or diarrhoea.

While you are taking Chemmart Gabapentin

Things you must do

If you are about to be started on any new medicine, remind your doctor and pharmacist that you are taking gabapentin.

Tell any other doctors, dentists, or pharmacists who treat you that you are taking this medicine.

If you are going to have surgery, tell the surgeon or anaesthetist that you are taking this medicine.

It may affect other medicines used during surgery.

If you become pregnant while taking this medicine, tell your doctor immediately.

If you are about to have any medical tests, tell your doctor that you are taking this medicine.

It may interfere with the results of some tests.

Keep all of your doctor's appointments so that your progress can be checked.

Your doctor may do some tests from time to time to make sure the medicine is working and to prevent unwanted side effects.

Tell your doctor if you feel gabapentin is not helping your condition.

Your doctor may need to change your medicine.

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

Otherwise, your doctor may change your treatment unnecessarily.

Things you must not do

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

Do not give your medicine to anyone else, even if they have the same condition as you.

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

If you stop taking it suddenly, your condition may worsen or you may have unwanted side effects such as anxiety, insomnia, nausea, pain and sweating. If possible, your doctor will gradually reduce the amount you take each day before stopping the medicine completely.

Things to be careful of

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

This medicine may cause dizziness, light-headedness or drowsiness in some people. If you have any of these symptoms, do not drive, operate machinery or do anything else that could be dangerous. Children should be careful when riding bicycles, climbing trees or doing anything else that could be dangerous.

Be careful when drinking alcohol while you are taking this medicine.

If you drink alcohol, dizziness, light-headedness or drowsiness may be worse. Your doctor may suggest you avoid alcohol while you are being treated with gabapentin.

Side effects

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

This medicine 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 attention 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.

Do not be alarmed by the following lists of side effects.

You may not experience any of them.

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

If you get any side effects, do not stop taking gabapentin 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
- changes in appetite
- indigestion
- changes in your weight
- constipation
- dry mouth
- muscle pain or cramps
- nausea or vomiting.

The above list includes the more common side effects of your medicine. They are usually mild and short-lived.

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

- weakness, unsteadiness when walking, reduced coordination or slowed reactions
- mood changes such as restlessness, agitation, hostility, nervousness, or irritability
- forgetfulness, confusion or loss of concentration
- difficulty speaking or slurred speech
- blurred or double vision, uncontrollable jerky eye movements, or difficulty seeing
- swelling of hands, ankles or feet
- fever, sore throat, coughing or other signs of infection.

The above list includes serious side effects which may require medical attention. Serious side effects are rare.

If any of the following happen, tell your doctor immediately or go to Accident and Emergency at your nearest hospital:

- more frequent or more severe seizures (fits)
- chest pain
- fast or irregular heart beats
- signs of allergic reaction such as 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.

The above list includes very serious side effects. You may need urgent medical attention or hospitalisation.

These side effects are very rare.

Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you notice anything that is making you feel unwell.

Other side effects not listed above may also occur in some people. Some of these side effects can only be found when your doctor does tests from time to time to check your progress.

After using Chemmart Gabapentin

Storage

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

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

Keep your capsules in a cool dry place where the temperature stays below 25°C.

Do not store gabapentin or any other medicine in the bathroom or near a sink. Do not leave it on a windowsill or in the car .

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 tells you to stop taking this medicine or the expiry date has passed, ask your pharmacist what to do with any medicine that is left over.

Product description

What it looks like

Chemmart Gabapentin capsules are available in 300 mg & 400 mg strengths.

Chemmart Gabapentin 300 mg capsules are opaque with a white body and a yellow cap. There are 100 capsules in each pack.

Chemmart Gabapentin 400 mg capsules are opaque with a white body and an orange cap. There are 100 capsules in each pack.

Ingredients

Active ingredients:

Chemmart Gabapentin 300 mg capsules contain 300 mg of gabapentin as the active ingredient.

Chemmart Gabapentin 400 mg capsules contain 400 mg of gabapentin as the active ingredient.

Other Ingredients:

- croscarmellose sodium
- magnesium stearate
- purified talc
- titanium dioxide
- gelatin
- iron oxide yellow (CI 77492)
- Black printing ink (SW-9008/SW-9009)
- Iron oxide red (CI 77491) (400mg capsules only).

This medicine does not contain lactose, sucrose, gluten, tartrazine or any other azo dyes.

Sponsor

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