

Call your doctor right away if you have any of these side effects:

- ▶ Allergic reaction (itching, hives, swelling in the face or hands, tingling in the mouth or throat, tightness in the chest or trouble breathing)
- ▶ Clumsiness or trouble with coordination
- ▶ Extreme tiredness, slurred speech
- ▶ Uncontrolled eye movements or blurred or double vision

**IF YOU HAVE ANY OTHER SIDE EFFECTS THAT YOU THINK ARE CAUSED BY THIS MEDICATION, TELL YOUR DOCTOR OR PHARMACIST.**

Please contact the Integrated Pain Service at 604-875-2345 ext. 5108 (toll-free within BC at 1-888-300-3088 ext. 5108) if you have further questions about your pain medication.

**Integrated Pain Service**

**GABAPENTIN**



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Learning & Development*

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# GABAPENTIN

(Neurontin®, Novo-Gabapentin®, others)

## WHAT IS GABAPENTIN?

This medication was first made to help control some types of epileptic seizures. Gabapentin has since been found to be effective for some types of pain, including headache pain, nerve pain and pain after surgery. The way that gabapentin works to reduce or prevent pain is not known. Gabapentin may be used alone or in combination with other medications.

Take this medication regularly to prevent or reduce the pain that you experience. It may take several weeks before you start to feel better.

## HOW TO USE AND STORE THIS MEDICATION:

- ▶ You may take this medication with or without food. Take the medication with food if you find it is upsetting to your stomach.
- ▶ Store the medication at room temperature away from heat, moisture and direct light.
- ▶ Store the medication out of reach of children.

## IF YOU MISS A DOSE:

- ▶ If you miss a dose or forget to take your medication, take it as soon as you remember. However, if it is almost time for your next dose, do not take the missed dose or double your next dose. Instead, continue your regular dosing schedule. If you are unsure what to do about a missed dose, contact your doctor or pharmacist.
- ▶ Do **NOT** take extra medication to make up for a missed dose.

## DRUGS AND FOOD TO AVOID:

- ▶ Ask your doctor or pharmacist before using any other medication, including non-prescription medications, vitamins and herbal products.
- ▶ If you take an antacid, take it at least 2 hours before or after taking gabapentin.

## WARNINGS:

- ▶ Tell your doctor if you are pregnant or breastfeeding, or if you have kidney disease.
- ▶ Do **NOT** stop taking this medication suddenly without asking your doctor – this medication is usually decreased slowly before it is stopped completely.

- ▶ Gabapentin can make you dizzy or drowsy (especially when first starting the medication) – **AVOID** driving, using machines or doing anything else that could be dangerous if you are not alert.

## SIDE EFFECTS:

This list of side effects is important for you to be aware of; however, it is also important to remember that not all side effects happen to all people. In fact, most people who take this medication have very few side effects.

These are some less serious side effects of taking gabapentin. Most of these less serious side effects will improve over the first few days of taking the medication. If you have problems with these less serious side effects, talk with your doctor or pharmacist:

- ▶ Behaviour changes (irritability, restlessness, trouble concentrating, moodiness)
- ▶ Fever, cough, sneezing, sore throat, stuffy nose
- ▶ Nausea (or vomiting)
- ▶ Shakiness