

Starting dose

Follow these instructions when first starting Gabapentin. By slowly increasing the dose over a month, you are less likely to experience side-effects. If you have any problems at any time, drop back to the previous dose and continue with that dose (without increasing it any further).

If you achieve pain relief at a lower dose (e.g. 100-200mg), you can continue taking the lower dose. You don't have to increase the dose any further.

Breakfast	Tea	Bedtime	
		100mg	for 3 days
100mg		100mg	for 3 days
100mg	100mg	100mg	for 3 days
100mg	100mg	200mg	for 3 days
200mg	100mg	200mg	for 3 days
200mg	200mg	200mg	for 3 days
200mg	200mg	300mg	for 3 days
300mg	200mg	300mg	for 3 days
300mg	300mg	300mg	for 3 days
Consult your GP for further dose increments			
600mg	600mg	600mg	Is the max recommended dose

Remember to ensure you have enough medication especially coming up to weekends or public holidays. Should you wish to ask any further questions about your medication, please speak to your GP, community nurse or pharmacist.

We are listening - how did we do?

We welcome your feedback as it helps us evaluate the services we provide. If you would like to tell us about your experience:

- speak to a member of staff
- visit our website www.wihb.scot.nhs.uk/feedback or share your story at: www.careopinion.org.uk or 0800 122 31 35
- tel. 01851 704704 (ext 2408) on a Tuesday and Friday afternoon between 1pm and 4pm.



Bòrd SSN nan Eilean Siar
NHS Western Isles

Gabapentin

Western Isles Pain Management Service



The information in this leaflet is to guide your use of Gabapentin safely.

Further information is available inside the medication packaging.

What is Gabapentin used for?

Gabapentin is a medicine which helps improve your pain control. It is different from other pain relievers. It is especially good for nerve pain e.g. shooting pains or burning pains.

How should I take Gabapentin?

Please take Gabapentin as per the chart on the reverse of this leaflet. The chart will help you begin taking the medicine. Do not stop taking this medicine without advice from your GP.

Once the pain has improved to an acceptable level, continue to take Gabapentin at the dose you have reached.

Gabapentin can be taken with or without food. If you are taking any indigestion remedies, leave two hours between taking these and your Gabapentin. Swallow the capsule with a drink of water.

Are there any side-effects?

All medicines can sometimes cause side-effects. The most common side-effects of this drug are: drowsiness, dizziness and dry mouth. A small number of people may feel sick or have constipation or diarrhoea. In some cases, Gabapentin can lead to drug dependence.

A detailed list of side-effects is also available inside the medication packaging. If you are at all worried, please talk to your GP, community nurse or pharmacist.

What if I forget a dose?

Take it as soon as you remember. However, if it is within two hours of the next dose, skip the dose you missed and take the next dose as you would normally.

How to manage side-effects

If you experience dry mouth, simply drink more non-alcoholic drinks. Most side-effects will improve after several days so it is worth continuing with Gabapentin.

Can I drive?

Drowsiness is a common side effect of this drug. If you are drowsy, you **MUST NOT** drive or operate machinery.

Can I drink alcohol?

Drinking alcohol may make you feel more drowsy. You should avoid alcohol or restrict your alcohol intake to 1-2 units per day.

Remember 1 unit = ½ pint beer/lager or a small glass of wine.

Can I take Gabapentin long-term?

You will probably need to take this medication for as long as you have pain. If other treatments or painkillers help to reduce your pain, the dose of Gabapentin may be reduced.

Pregnancy and breastfeeding

If planning a pregnancy or breast feeding discuss this with your GP, community nurse or pharmacist before starting to take this medication.

Do not stop taking Gabapentin suddenly as it needs to be reduced gradually over 4 weeks.

You must discuss this with your GP before reducing or stopping the medication.