

# SODIUM VALPROATE (EPILIM)

## What is it used for?



To control seizures



To stabilise your mood



To prevent migraines

## Types available in NUH

Follow the instructions on your medicine label carefully and inform your pharmacist or doctor if you are unsure.



200mg Enteric Coated Tablet



200mg/5ml Syrup



300mg Controlled Release Tablet

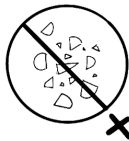


500mg Sustained Release Tablet

## How should I take it?

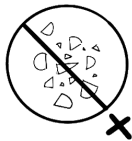
Take your dose with water, with or after food to minimize stomach upset.

### 200mg Enteric Coated Tablet:



Do not crush or chew tablet

### 300mg Controlled Release Tablet:

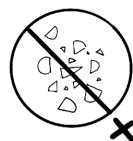


Do not crush or chew tablet

### 500mg Sustained Release Tablet:



Can be halved, swallow 1 piece at a time



Do not crush or chew tablet

### 200mg/5ml Syrup:



Shake well before use



Use a medicine spoon or syringe to ensure a right amount is taken

## What to do if I miss a dose?

- If the next dose is not due for at least 6 hours, take the missed dose right away. If the next dose is due in less than 6 hours, do not take the missed dose. Take the next dose at the scheduled time.
- Do not take extra medicine.
- If you missed two or more doses, contact your doctor or pharmacist.
- If there is less than two weeks supply of medicines, make an appointment with your doctor or arrange to collect more medicines.

## Treatment outcome

### When will I feel better?

- It may take a few weeks to months for sodium valproate to work properly in stabilising your mood. You may still experience symptoms during this time.

### How long will I take it for?

- Once your illness is under control, you'll usually need to keep taking sodium valproate for many years.
- Do not stop taking or change your dose even after you feel better without checking with your doctor.
- Your symptoms may return if treatment is stopped too early.

## Possible side effects

Generally affects up to 10% of patients

These side effects should wear off within 1-2 weeks.

Inform your doctor or pharmacist should these side effects become too bothersome:



#### **Nausea, stomach pain**

Take sodium valproate with or after a meal or snack. Avoid rich or spicy food.



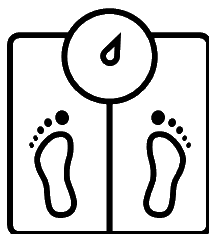
#### **Temporary slight hair loss**

Usually in initial stage of treatment. Can be dose-related, consult your doctor.



#### **Diarrhea**

Have small but frequent sips of water.



#### **Increased appetite or weight gain**

Have a balanced diet and regular exercise to stabilise your weight.



#### **Dry or sore mouth, or swollen gums**

Try sugar-free gum or sweets, or sipping cold drinks



#### **Trembling of hands and arms**

This can be dose-related, consult your doctor for possible adjustments to your treatment.



#### **Drowsiness or dizziness**

Do not drive or operate machinery and avoid alcoholic drinks.

\*This is only a guide; your medication experience may be different.

## Serious side effects

Seek help straight away if you experience:



### Allergic reaction:

Skin rash, difficulty breathing, swelling in the face, lips, or other parts of the body

### If serious:

Call 995 or go to A&E



**Severe loss of appetite, stomach pain or persistent vomiting**



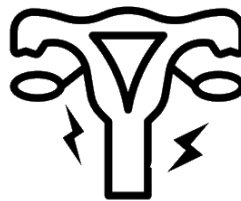
**Yellowing of eyes or skin (Jaundice)**



**Unusual bleeding or bruising**



**Blurred or double vision**



**Menstrual disturbances**



**Severe weakness or dizziness**



**Thoughts about harming yourself**

## Pregnancy

Sodium valproate is generally not recommended in pregnancy as it can cause birth defects or learning and developmental problems for the child.

### Not planning to become pregnant?

- Use an effective contraception method throughout treatment

### Planning to become pregnant or might already be pregnant?

- Contact your doctor as soon as possible. Do not stop taking your medicine without talking to your doctor first. Your doctor may continue to prescribe sodium valproate.



## Breastfeeding

Inform your doctor if you are breastfeeding. Small amounts of sodium valproate may pass into your breast milk but it's unlikely to harm your baby, unless your baby was born premature or has kidney problems.



## What should I do if I overdose?

If you take more than the prescribed dose, consult your doctor or pharmacist immediately.

## What foods should I avoid?



### Alcohol

It may increase the effects of drowsiness when you are taking this drug.

## Drug interactions



Consult the doctor or pharmacist before taking other medications.

## Monitoring



- Keep to your appointments with your doctor.
- Regular blood tests are required to monitor your valproate levels, kidney and liver function.
- **First time users:** a follow-up 2-3 weeks after the start of treatment is required.
- **Chronic users:** a follow-up every 6-12 months is required throughout treatment.

Tell your doctor if you are:

1. On other medications
2. Pregnant
3. Trying to get pregnant
4. Breastfeeding

### National University Hospital

5 Lower Kent Ridge Road, Singapore 119074

Tel: (65) 6779 5555 Fax: (65) 6779 5678

Website: [www.nuh.com.sg](http://www.nuh.com.sg)

The information provided in this publication is meant purely for educational purposes and may not be used as a substitute for medical diagnosis or treatment. You should seek the advice of your doctor or a qualified healthcare provider before starting any treatment or if you have any questions related to your health, physical fitness or medical conditions.

Information is correct at time of printing (Dec 2020) and subject to revision without prior notice.

Copyright (2020) National University Hospital

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced without permission in writing from the National University Hospital.