

Lamotrigine

What is lamotrigine?

LAMOTRIGINE is effective in helping to control partial seizures (convulsions) in adults and children with epilepsy. Lamotrigine is also used in adults and children who have generalized (major) seizures (convulsions) due to a special condition named Lennox-Gastaut syndrome. Lamotrigine is usually prescribed with other medications that also help to control the convulsions, although sometimes lamotrigine may be used by itself. Lamotrigine is also used in adults for a mental health condition called bipolar disorder. Generic lamotrigine tablets are not yet available.

What should I tell my health care provider before I take this medicine?

They need to know if you have any of these conditions:

- a history of depression or bipolar disorder
- folate deficiency
- kidney disease
- liver disease
- thoughts of hurting yourself or others, or of suicide
- an unusual or allergic reaction (including rash) to lamotrigine, other medicines, foods, dyes, or preservatives
- pregnant or trying to get pregnant
- breast-feeding

How should I take this medicine?

• If you take regular Lamictal® tablets: Take lamotrigine tablets by mouth. Follow the directions on the prescription label. Swallow the tablets with a drink of water. Do not chew these tablets--they have a bitter taste. If lamotrigine upsets your stomach, take it with food or milk. Take your doses at regular intervals. Do not take your medicine more often than directed.

• If you take Lamictal® Chewable Dispersible tablets: Take these lamotrigine tablets by mouth. These tablets may be swallowed whole, chewed, mixed in water, or in diluted fruit juice to aid swallowing. To mix the tablets in water or juice, add the tablets to a small amount of liquid (enough to cover the medication) in a glass or spoon. The tablets will dissolve in about 1 minute. Once dissolved, mix or swirl the liquid and take the entire solution immediately. It is important that you swallow all of the liquid used to prepare the dose, so that the full prescribed dose is given. Take your doses at regular intervals. Do not take your medicine more often than directed.

Contact your pediatrician or health care professional regarding the use of this medication in children. Special care may be needed.

What if I miss a dose?

If you miss a dose, take it as soon as you can. If it is almost time for your next dose, take only that dose. Do not take double or extra doses.

What drug(s) may interact with lamotrigine?

- acetaminophen (e.g., Tylenol®)
- birth control pills, patches, rings, or injections
- bosentan
- carbamazepine
- medicines used to treat HIV or AIDS infection (examples: indinavir, ritonavir)
- methotrexate
- phenobarbital
- phenytoin
- primidone
- pyrimethamine
- rifampin
- sevelamer
- trimethoprim
- valproic acid

Tell your prescriber or health care professional about all other medicines you are taking, including non-prescription medicines, nutritional supplements, or herbal products. Also tell your prescriber or health care professional if you are a frequent user of drinks with caffeine or alcohol, if you smoke, or if you use illegal drugs. These may affect the way your medicine works. Check with your health care professional before stopping or starting any of your medicines.

What side effects may I notice from taking lamotrigine?

Most people who take lamotrigine tolerate it well. The most common side effects are dizziness, drowsiness, headache, blurred vision, nausea, and rash. If a skin rash occurs at any time while taking lamotrigine, contact your prescriber immediately. Rashes may be very severe and sometimes requires being treatment in the hospital. Deaths from rashes have occurred. Serious rashes occur more often in children than adults taking lamotrigine. It is more common for these serious rashes to occur during the first 2 months of treatment, but a rash can occur at any time.

Side effects that you should report to your prescriber or health care professional immediately:

- fever
- painful sores in the mouth, eyes, or nose
- redness, blistering, peeling or loosening of the skin, including inside the mouth
- skin rash of any type, itching
- swelling of the face, lips or tongue
- swollen lymph glands

Side effects you should report to your prescriber or health care professional as soon as possible:

- blurred, or double vision
- changes in seizure type or frequency
- depression, or mood changes

- difficulty walking or controlling muscle movements
- uncontrollable eye movements
- unusual weakness or tiredness

Side effects that usually do not require medical attention (report to your prescriber or health care professional if they continue or are bothersome):

- back pain, joint aches and pains
- diarrhea, or constipation
- difficulty sleeping
- dizziness, drowsiness
- dry mouth
- headache
- hot flashes
- loss of appetite
- menstrual disorder
- nausea, vomiting
- slurred speech
- stomach upset, indigestion
- stuffy, runny nose
- tremor

What should I watch for while taking lamotrigine?

Visit your prescriber or health care professional for a regular check on your progress. Wear a Medic Alert bracelet or necklace. Carry an identification card with information about your condition, medications, and prescriber or health care professional.

It is important to take lamotrigine exactly as instructed by your health care professional. When first starting lamotrigine treatment, your prescriber will have to adjust your dosage slowly, and it may take weeks or months before your dose is stable. You should contact your prescriber or health care professional if your seizures get worse or if you have any new types of seizures. Do not stop taking lamotrigine or any of your seizure medicines unless instructed by your prescriber or health care professional. Stopping your medicine suddenly can increase your seizures or their severity.

You may get drowsy, dizzy (more common in women than in men), or have blurred vision. Do not drive, use machinery, or do anything that needs mental alertness until you know how lamotrigine affects you. To reduce dizzy or fainting spells, do not sit or stand up quickly, especially if you are an older patient. Alcohol can increase drowsiness and dizziness. Avoid alcoholic drinks or medicines containing alcohol.

If you are using lamotrigine for treatment of bipolar disorder, it is important that you report any changes in your mood to your health care provider. For example, if you should have a worsening of your bipolar disorder, get mentally depressed, feel extremely hyperactive or manic, have difficulty sleeping, have thoughts of hurting yourself or committing suicide, you need to seek help immediately from your health care professional. If you are a caregiver for someone receiving lamotrigine for bipolar

disorder, you should also report these behavioral changes immediately.

If you are going to have surgery, tell your prescriber or health care professional that you are taking lamotrigine.

Where can I keep my medicine?

Keep out of reach of children in a container that small children cannot open.

Store at room temperature between 15 and 30 degrees C (59 and 86 degrees F). Throw away any unused medicine after the expiration date.

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NOTE: This information is not intended to cover all possible uses, precautions, interactions, or adverse effects for this drug. If you have questions about the drug(s) you are taking, check with your health care professional.

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