PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Lamotrigine

This information from UpToDate® Lexidrug™ explains what you need to know about this medication, including what it's used for, how to take it, its side effects, and when to call your healthcare provider.

Brand Names: US

LaMICtal; LaMICtal ODT; LaMICtal Starter; LaMICtal XR; Subvenite; Subvenite Starter Kit-Blue; Subvenite Starter Kit-Green; Subvenite Starter Kit-Orange

Brand Names: Canada

AG-Lamotrigine; APO-LamoTRIgine; Auro-LamoTRIgine; JAMP-Lamotrigine; LaMICtal; LamoTRIgine-100; LamoTRIgine-150; LamoTRIgine-25; MYLAN-LamoTRIgine; PMS-LamoTRIgine; TEVA-LamoTRIgine [DSC]

Warning

All products:

- Severe skin reactions may happen with this drug. These include Stevens-Johnson syndrome (SJS), toxic epidermal necrolysis (TEN), and other serious reactions. Sometimes, body organs may also be affected. These reactions can be deadly. Get medical help right away if you have signs like red, swollen, blistered, or peeling skin; red or irritated eyes; sores in your mouth, throat, nose, eyes, genitals, or any areas of skin; fever; chills; body aches; shortness of breath; or swollen glands.
- The chance of a skin reaction is raised in children between 2 and 17 years old. It may also be raised if you take valproic acid or divalproex sodium with this drug, if you start taking this drug at too high of a dose, or if your dose is raised too fast. People with a certain gene (HLA-B*1502) also have a higher risk. This gene is more common in people of some Asian ancestry like Han Chinese and Thai. However, skin reactions have also happened without any of these. Talk with your doctor.
- Most cases of skin reactions have happened within 2 to 8 weeks of starting this drug, but some show up after longer treatment like 6 months. Talk with the doctor.

Extended-release tablets:

- This drug is not approved for use in children younger than 13 years old. Talk with the doctor.

What is this drug used for?

- It is used to help control certain kinds of seizures.
- It is used to treat bipolar disorder.
- It may be given to you for other reasons. Talk with the doctor.

What do I need to tell my doctor BEFORE I take this drug?

- If you are allergic to this drug; any part of this drug; or any other drugs, foods, or substances. Tell your doctor about the allergy and what signs you had.
- If you are taking dofetilide.

This is not a list of all drugs or health problems that interact with this drug.

Tell your doctor and pharmacist about all of your drugs (prescription or OTC, natural products, vitamins) and health problems. You must check to make sure that it is safe for you to take this drug with all of your drugs and health problems. Do not start, stop, or change the dose of any drug without checking with your doctor.

What are some things I need to know or do while I take this drug?

For all uses of this drug:

- Tell all of your health care providers that you take this drug. This includes your doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and dentists.
- Avoid driving and doing other tasks or actions that call for you to be alert until you see how this drug affects you.
- It may take several weeks to see the full effects.
- Do not stop taking this drug all of a sudden without calling your doctor. You may have a greater risk of side effects, including seizures. If you need to stop this drug, you will want to slowly stop it as ordered by your doctor.
- If you have stopped taking this drug and are going to start taking it again, talk with your doctor. You may need to be restarted at a lower dose and raise the dose slowly.
- Have your blood work and other lab tests checked as you have been told by your doctor.
- This drug may affect certain lab tests. Tell all of your health care providers

and lab workers that you take this drug.

- Talk with your doctor before you use alcohol, marijuana or other forms of cannabis, or prescription or OTC drugs that may slow your actions.
- Some drugs may look the same as this drug or may have names that sound like this drug. Always check to make sure you have the right product. If you see any change in the way this drug looks like shape, color, size, or wording, check with your pharmacist.
- If the patient is a child, use this drug with care. The risk of some side effects may be higher in children.
- Drugs with estrogen, including hormonal birth control, may change how much of this drug is in your body. Talk to your doctor before you start or stop any hormone-based birth control or other drug with estrogen in it. For birth control pills, the chance of this drug's side effects may be raised during the week you are taking the pills that are not active. Talk with your doctor.
- Birth control pills and other hormone-based birth control may not work as well to prevent pregnancy. Use some other kind of birth control also like a condom when taking this drug.
- Tell your doctor if you are pregnant, plan on getting pregnant, or are breast-feeding. You will need to talk about the benefits and risks to you and the baby.

For seizures:

- If seizures are different or worse after starting this drug, talk with the doctor.

What are some side effects that I need to call my doctor about right away?

WARNING/CAUTION: Even though it may be rare, some people may have very bad and sometimes deadly side effects when taking a drug. Tell your doctor or get medical help right away if you have any of the following signs or symptoms that may be related to a very bad side effect:

- Signs of an allergic reaction, like rash; hives; itching; red, swollen, blistered, or peeling skin with or without fever; wheezing; tightness in the chest or

throat; trouble breathing, swallowing, or talking; unusual hoarseness; or swelling of the mouth, face, lips, tongue, or throat.

- Signs of kidney problems like unable to pass urine, change in how much urine is passed, blood in the urine, or a big weight gain.
- Signs of liver problems like dark urine, tiredness, decreased appetite, upset stomach or stomach pain, light-colored stools, throwing up, or yellow skin or eyes.
- Shortness of breath, a big weight gain, or swelling in the arms or legs.
- Severe muscle pain or weakness.
- Severe joint pain or swelling.
- Change in eyesight.
- Fever, chills, or sore throat; any unexplained bruising or bleeding; or feeling very tired or weak.
- Change in balance.
- Not able to control eye movements.
- Flu-like signs.
- Painful periods.
- Period (menstrual) changes. These include spotting or bleeding between cycles.
- This drug can cause an abnormal heartbeat. Sometimes, this may be life-threatening. If you have an abnormal heartbeat, heart failure, or other heart problems, talk with your doctor. Call your doctor right away if you have a fast, slow, or abnormal heartbeat; severe dizziness or passing out; chest pain; or shortness of breath.
- Like other drugs that may be used for seizures, this drug may rarely raise the risk of suicidal thoughts or actions. The risk may be higher in people who have had suicidal thoughts or actions in the past. Call the doctor right away about any new or worse signs like depression; feeling nervous, restless, or grouchy; panic attacks; or other changes in mood or behavior. Call the doctor right away if any suicidal thoughts or actions occur.

- This drug may raise the chance of a severe brain problem called aseptic meningitis. Call your doctor right away if you have a headache, fever, chills, very upset stomach or throwing up, stiff neck, rash, bright lights bother your eyes, feeling sleepy, or feeling confused.
- An immune system problem called hemophagocytic lymphohistiocytosis (HLH) has happened with this drug. HLH can be life-threatening. Call your doctor right away if you have fever, swollen gland, rash, seizures, feeling confused or not alert, change in balance, or trouble walking that is new or worse.

What are some other side effects of this drug?

All drugs may cause side effects. However, many people have no side effects or only have minor side effects. Call your doctor or get medical help if any of these side effects or any other side effects bother you or do not go away:

- Feeling dizzy, sleepy, tired, or weak.
- Constipation, diarrhea, stomach pain, upset stomach, throwing up, or decreased appetite.
- Shakiness.
- Trouble sleeping.
- Nose or throat irritation.
- Weight loss.
- Dry mouth.
- Back pain.

These are not all of the side effects that may occur. If you have questions about side effects, call your doctor. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects.

You may report side effects to your national health agency.

You may report side effects to the FDA at 1-800-332-1088. You may also report side effects at https://www.fda.gov/medwatch.

How is this drug best taken?

Use this drug as ordered by your doctor. Read all information given to you. Follow all instructions closely.

All products:

- Take with or without food.
- Keep taking this drug as you have been told by your doctor or other health care provider, even if you feel well.
- Do not change your dose or stop this drug without calling your doctor. This could cause seizures.

All oral tablet products:

- Swallow whole. Do not chew, break, or crush.
- If you have trouble swallowing, talk with your doctor.

Tablets for suspension:

- It may be swallowed whole, chewed, or mixed in water or fruit juice.
- If chewed, drink a little water or fruit juice to help swallow.
- You may break up tablet by adding liquid to cover tablet in a glass or spoon. Wait at least 1 minute until fully broken up, then mix and drink.

Oral-disintegrating tablet:

- Place on your tongue and let it dissolve. Water is not needed. Do not swallow it whole. Do not chew, break, or crush it.

Oral suspension:

- Shake well before use.
- Measure liquid doses carefully. Use the measuring device that comes with this drug. If there is none, ask the pharmacist for a device to measure this drug.

What do I do if I miss a dose?

- Take a missed dose as soon as you think about it.
- If it is close to the time for your next dose, skip the missed dose and go back to your normal time.
- Do not take 2 doses at the same time or extra doses.

How do I store and/or throw out this drug?

All products:

- Store at room temperature protected from light. Store in a dry place. Do not store in a bathroom.
- Keep all drugs in a safe place. Keep all drugs out of the reach of children and pets.
- Throw away unused or expired drugs. Do not flush down a toilet or pour down a drain unless you are told to do so. Check with your pharmacist if you have questions about the best way to throw out drugs. There may be drug take-back programs in your area.

Oral suspension:

- Throw away any part not used 90 days after opening.

General drug facts

- If your symptoms or health problems do not get better or if they become worse, call your doctor.
- Do not share your drugs with others and do not take anyone else's drugs.
- Some drugs may have another patient information leaflet. If you have any questions about this drug, please talk with your doctor, nurse, pharmacist, or other health care provider.
- This drug comes with an extra patient fact sheet called a Medication Guide. Read it with care. Read it again each time this drug is refilled. If you have any questions about this drug, please talk with the doctor, pharmacist, or other

health care provider.

- If you think there has been an overdose, call your poison control center or get medical care right away. Be ready to tell or show what was taken, how much, and when it happened.

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This generalized information is a limited summary of diagnosis, treatment, and/or medication information. It is not meant to be comprehensive and should be used as a tool to help the user understand and/or assess potential diagnostic and treatment options. It does NOT include all information about conditions, treatments, medications, side effects, or risks that may apply to a specific patient. It is not intended to be medical advice or a substitute for the medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment of a health care provider based on the health care provider's examination and assessment of a patient's specific and unique circumstances. Patients must speak with a health care provider for complete information about their health, medical questions, and treatment options, including any risks or benefits regarding use of medications. This information does not endorse any treatments or medications as safe, effective, or approved for treating a specific patient. UpToDate, Inc. and its affiliates disclaim any warranty or liability relating to this information or the use thereof. The use of this information is governed by the Terms of Use, available at https://www.wolterskluwer.com/en/know/clinical-effectiveness-terms.

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If you have questions or concerns, contact your healthcare provider. A member of your care team will answer Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Outside those hours, you can leave a message or talk with another MSK provider. There is always a doctor or nurse on call. If you're not sure how to reach your healthcare provider, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit www.mskcc.org/pe to search our virtual library.

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