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 have happened with this drug. These have included Stevens-Johnson syndrome (SJS), toxic epidermal necrolysis (TEN), and other severe skin reactions. Sometimes these have been deadly. Get medical help right away if your child has signs like red, swollen, blistered, or peeling skin; other skin irritation (with or without fever); red or irritated eyes; or sores in the mouth, throat, nose, or eyes.
- The chance of a skin reaction is raised in children between 2 and 17 years old. It may also be raised if your child takes valproic acid or divalproex sodium with this drug, if your child starts taking this drug at too high of a dose, or if your child's 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 the 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 your child for other reasons. Talk with the doctor.

What do I need to tell the doctor BEFORE my child takes this drug?

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

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

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

What are some things I need to know or do while my child takes this drug?

For all uses of this drug:

- Tell all of your child's health care providers that your child is taking this drug. This includes your child's doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and dentists.
- Have your child avoid tasks or actions that call for alertness until you see how this drug affects your child. These are things like riding a bike, playing sports, or using items such as scissors, lawnmowers, electric scooters, toy cars, or motorized vehicles.
- It may take several weeks to see the full effects.
- Do not stop giving this drug to your child all of a sudden without calling the doctor. Your child may have a greater risk of side effects, including seizures. If your child needs to stop this drug, you will want to slowly stop it as told by the doctor.
- If you have stopped giving this drug to your child and are going to start giving it again, talk with the doctor. Your child may need to be restarted at a lower dose and raise the dose slowly.

- Have your child's blood work and other lab tests checked as you have been told by the doctor.
- This drug may affect certain lab tests. Tell all of your child's health care providers and lab workers that your child takes this drug.
- Alcohol may interact with this drug. Be sure your child does not drink alcohol.
- Talk with your child's doctor before your child uses marijuana, other forms of cannabis, or prescription or OTC drugs that may slow your child's 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 the body. Talk to the doctor before your child starts or stops 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 your child is taking the pills that are not active. Talk with the doctor.

If your child is or may be sexually active:

- Birth control pills and other hormone-based birth control may not work as well to prevent pregnancy. Be sure your child uses some other kind of birth control also, like a condom, when taking this drug.

If your child is pregnant or breast-feeding a baby:

- Talk with the doctor if your child is pregnant, becomes pregnant, or is breast-feeding a baby. You will need to talk about the benefits and risks to your child 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 child's 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 child's doctor or get medical help right away if your child has any of the following signs or symptoms that may be related to a very bad side effect:

For all uses of this drug:

- 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.
- Change in eyesight.
- Severe joint pain or swelling.
- 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.
- This drug can cause an abnormal heartbeat. Sometimes, this may be life-

threatening. If your child has an abnormal heartbeat, heart failure, or other heart problems, talk with the doctor. Call the doctor right away if your child has 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 very bad brain problem called aseptic meningitis. Call the doctor right away if your child has a headache, fever, chills, very upset stomach or throwing up, stiff neck, rash, bright lights bother the 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 the doctor right away if your child has fever, swollen gland, rash, seizures, feeling confused or not alert, change in balance, or trouble walking that is new or worse.

If your child has menstrual periods:

- Painful periods.
- Period (menstrual) changes. These include spotting or bleeding between cycles.

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 child's doctor or get medical help if any of these side effects or any other side effects bother your child 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 child's doctor. Call your child's doctor for medical advice about side effects.

You may report side effects to your national health agency.

How is this drug best given?

Give this drug as ordered by your child's doctor. Read all information given to you. Follow all instructions closely.

All products:

- Give this drug with or without food.
- Do not change your child's dose or stop giving this drug to your child without calling the doctor. This could cause seizures.
- Keep giving this drug to your child as you have been told by your child's doctor or other health care provider, even if your child feels well.

All oral tablet products:

- Have your child swallow whole. Do not let your child chew, break, or crush.
- If your child has trouble swallowing, talk with the doctor.

Tablets for suspension:

- It may be swallowed whole, chewed, or mixed in water or fruit juice.
- If chewed, have your child drink a little water or fruit juice to help swallow it.
- 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 have your child drink.

Oral-disintegrating tablet:

- Place on your child's tongue and let it dissolve. Water is not needed. Do not let your child swallow it whole. Do not let your child 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 my child misses a dose?

- Give a missed dose as soon as you think about it.
- If it is close to the time for your child's next dose, skip the missed dose and go back to your child's normal time.
- Do not give 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 child's symptoms or health problems do not get better or if they become worse, call your child's doctor.
- Do not share your child's drug with others and do not give anyone else's drug to your child.
- Some drugs may have another patient information leaflet. If you have any questions about this drug, please talk with your child's doctor, nurse, 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

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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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