PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

# Vigabatrin

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

Sabril; Vigadrone; Vigafyde; Vigpoder [DSC]

### Brand Names: Canada

Sabril

### Warning

- This drug may cause severe eyesight problems like loss of eyesight. Eyesight problems include not being able to see to the side when looking straight ahead and only being able to see straight ahead. Blurred eyesight may also happen. The risk of eyesight problems may be higher with higher doses of this drug and the longer this drug is taken. If these eyesight problems happen, they will not get better. Eyesight problems may happen within weeks of

starting this drug or sooner, or at any time while taking it, even after months or years. Talk with the doctor.

- Call your child's doctor right away if your child has any eyesight changes. Call the doctor right away if your child starts to trip, bump into things, or is more clumsy than normal. Call the doctor right away if your child is surprised by people or things in front of them that seem to come out of no where.
- You will need to have your child's eyesight tested before starting this drug, while taking it, and for some time after stopping it. These tests may not find loss of eyesight before it is severe.
- If your child has eyesight problems like loss of eyesight, is at risk for loss of eyesight, or is taking drugs that may cause eye problems, talk with your child's doctor.

## What is this drug used for?

- It is used to help control certain kinds of seizures.
- It is used to treat infantile spasms.

## 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 breast-feeding a baby:

- Be sure your child does not breast-feed a baby while taking this drug.

This drug may interact with other drugs or health problems.

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?

- 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 or clear eyesight 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.

- 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 seizures. If your child needs to stop this drug, you will want to slowly stop it as 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.
- If seizures are different or worse after starting this drug, talk with the doctor.
- If your child's weight changes, talk with the doctor. The dose of this drug may need to be changed.
- This drug may cause MRI changes that are not normal in infants. This has not been seen in older children or adults. It is not known if these changes are harmful. Talk with the doctor.

## If your child is pregnant:

- This drug may cause harm to the unborn baby if your child takes it during pregnancy. If your child is pregnant or gets pregnant while taking this drug, call the doctor right away.

## 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:

- 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 a urinary tract infection (UTI) like blood in the urine, burning or pain when passing urine, feeling the need to pass urine often or right away, fever, lower stomach pain, or pelvic pain.
- Feeling confused, not able to focus, or change in behavior.

- Not able to control eye movements.
- Severe muscle pain or weakness.
- Change in balance.
- Fever.
- Ear pain.
- Swelling.
- Memory problems or loss.
- Trouble walking.
- Painful periods.
- Redness or white patches in mouth or throat.
- 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.
- Nerve problems like burning, numbness, or tingling feelings that are not normal have happened with this drug. It is not known if these nerve problems will go away if this drug is stopped. Talk with the doctor.

## 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.
- Cough.
- Nose or throat irritation.
- Signs of a common cold.
- Headache.
- Trouble sleeping.
- Back, muscle, or joint pain.
- Weight gain.
- Shakiness.
- Flu-like signs.

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.
- Ask the doctor what to do if your child is not able to take the full dose. Ask the doctor what to do if your child throws up or spits up after taking this drug.
- 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.

### Powder for solution:

- Mix with water as told before you give this drug. Be sure your child does not swallow the dry powder.
- Be sure you know how many packets to use for each dose. Use 10 mL of water for each packet of this drug.
- 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.
- Do not use a household teaspoon or tablespoon to

measure this drug. Doing so could lead to the dose being too high.

- Give the mixture right away. Do not store for use at a later time.
- Do not use if the solution is cloudy or has particles.
- Do not use if solution changes color.
- Throw away any part of the mixture left over after the dose is given.

### Oral solution:

- 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.
- Do not use a household teaspoon or tablespoon to measure this drug. Doing so could lead to the dose being too high.
- Be sure you know your child's dose and how much of this drug to give your child. If the dose you are giving does not fit into the syringe, be sure you know what to do.
- Those who have feeding tubes may use this drug. Use as you have been told. Flush the feeding tube after this drug is given.

## What do I do if my child misses a dose?

- Call your child's doctor to find out what to do.

## How do I store and/or throw out this drug?
## All products:

- 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.

## Tablets and powder packets:

- Store in the original container at room temperature.

## Oral solution:

- Store unopened bottles at room temperature.
- After opening, store in a refrigerator or at room temperature. Store with the lid tightly closed. Do not freeze.
- Throw away any part not used 90 days after opening.
- If the adapter has not been put in the bottle when you

get it, prepare the bottle as you have been told or read the package insert. Use a new adapter with each new bottle. Do not take the adapter out of the bottle after it has been put in.

## 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.

## Consumer Information Use and Disclaimer

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,

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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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