

**Package leaflet: Information for the user**

# **Gabapentin 100 mg, 300 mg & 400 mg Capsules**

## **GABAPENTIN**

**Read all of this leaflet carefully before you start taking this medicine because it contains important information for you.**

- Keep this leaflet. You may need to read it again.
- If you have any further questions, ask your doctor or pharmacist.
- This medicine has been prescribed for you only. Do not pass it on to others. It may harm them, even if their signs of illness are the same as yours.
- If you get any side effects, talk to your doctor or pharmacist. This includes any possible side effects not listed in this leaflet. See section 4.

### **What is in this leaflet:**

1. What Gabapentin is and what it is used for
2. What you need to know before you take Gabapentin
3. How to take Gabapentin
4. Possible side effects
5. How to store Gabapentin
6. Contents of the pack and other information

### **1. What Gabapentin is and what it is used for**

Gabapentin belongs to a group of medicines used to treat epilepsy and peripheral neuropathic pain (long lasting pain caused by damage to the nerves).

Various forms of epilepsy (seizures that are initially limited to certain parts of the brain, whether the seizure spreads to other parts of the brain or not). Your doctor will prescribe Gabapentin for you to help treat your epilepsy when your current treatment is not fully controlling your condition. You should take Gabapentin in addition to your current treatment unless told otherwise. Gabapentin can also be used on its own to treat adults and children over 12 years of age.

Peripheral neuropathic pain (long lasting pain caused by damage to the nerves). A variety of different diseases can cause peripheral (primarily occurring in the legs and/or arms) neuropathic pain, such as diabetes or shingles. Pain sensations may be described as hot, burning, throbbing, shooting, stabbing, sharp, cramping, aching, tingling, numbness, pins and needles etc.

### **2. What you need to know before you take Gabapentin**

#### **Do not take Gabapentin**

- if you are allergic to gabapentin or any of the other ingredients of this medicine (listed in section 6).

#### **Warnings and precautions**

Talk to your doctor or pharmacist before taking Gabapentin:

- if you suffer from kidney problems your doctor may prescribe a different dosing schedule
- if you are on haemodialysis (to remove waste products because of kidney failure)
- if you develop signs such as persistent stomach pain, feeling sick and being sick contact your doctor immediately
- if you have nervous system disorders, respiratory disorders, or you are more than 65 years old, your doctor may prescribe you a different dosing regimen.

Cases of abuse and dependence have been reported for gabapentin from the post-marketing experience. Talk to your doctor if you have a history of abuse or dependence.

A small number of people being treated with anti-epileptics such as gabapentin have had thoughts of harming or killing themselves. If at any time you have these thoughts, immediately contact your doctor.

#### **Important information about potentially serious reactions**

A small number of people taking Gabapentin get an allergic reaction or potentially serious skin reaction, which may develop into more serious problems if they are not treated. You need to know these symptoms to look out for while you are taking Gabapentin.

**Read the description of these symptoms in section 4 of this leaflet** under 'Contact your doctor immediately if you experience any of the following symptoms after taking this medicine as they can be serious'.

Muscle weakness, tenderness or pain and particularly, if at the same time, you feel unwell or have a high temperature it may be caused by an abnormal muscle breakdown which can be life-threatening and lead to kidney problems. You may also experience discoloration of your urine, and a change in blood test results (notably blood creatine phosphokinase increased). If you experience any of these signs or symptoms, please contact your doctor immediately.

#### **Other medicines and Gabapentin**

Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you are taking, have recently taken or might take any other medicines. In particular, tell your doctor (or pharmacist) if you are taking or have been recently taking any medicines for convulsions, sleeping disorders, depression, anxiety, or any other neurological or psychiatric problems.

If you are taking any medicines containing opioids (such as morphine), please tell your doctor or pharmacist as opioids may increase the effect of Gabapentin. In addition, combination of Gabapentin with opioids may cause symptoms like sleepiness and/or decrease in breathing.

Gabapentin is not expected to interact with other antiepileptic drugs or the oral contraceptive pill.

Gabapentin may interfere with some laboratory tests, if you require a urine test tell your doctor or hospital that you are taking Gabapentin.

If Gabapentin and antacids containing aluminium and magnesium are taken at the same time, absorption of Gabapentin from the stomach may be reduced. It is therefore recommended that Gabapentin is taken at the earliest two hours after taking an antacid.

#### **Gabapentin with food and drink**

Gabapentin can be taken with or without food.

#### **Pregnancy, breast-feeding and fertility**

If you are pregnant or breast-feeding, think you may be pregnant or are planning to have a baby, ask your doctor or pharmacist for advice before taking any medicine.

Gabapentin should not be taken during pregnancy, unless you are told otherwise by your doctor. Effective contraception must be used by women of child-bearing potential.

There have been no studies specifically looking at the use of gabapentin in pregnant women, but other medications used to treat seizures have reported an increased risk of harm to the foetus, particularly when more than one seizure medication is taken at the same time. Therefore, whenever possible and only under the advice of your doctor, you should try to take only one seizure medication during pregnancy.

Do not suddenly discontinue taking this medicine as this may lead to breakthrough seizure, which could have serious consequences for you and your baby.

Contact your doctor immediately if you become pregnant, think you might be pregnant or are planning to become pregnant while taking Gabapentin.

Gabapentin, the active substance of Gabapentin, is excreted in human milk. Because the effect on the nursing infant is unknown, it is not recommended to breast-feed your baby while using Gabapentin.

There is no effect on fertility in animal studies.

### **Driving and using machines**

Gabapentin may produce dizziness, drowsiness and tiredness. You should not drive, operate complex machinery or engage in other potentially hazardous activities until you know whether this medication affects your ability to perform these activities.

### **Gabapentin contains lactose anhydrous**

If you have been told by your doctor that you have an intolerance to some sugars, contact your doctor before taking this medicinal product.

### **3. How to take Gabapentin**

Always take this medicine exactly as your doctor has told you. Check with your doctor or pharmacist if you are not sure.

Your doctor will determine what dose is appropriate for you.

If you have the impression that the effect of Gabapentin is too strong or too weak, talk to your doctor or pharmacist.

Always swallow the capsules whole with plenty of water.

Continue taking Gabapentin until your doctor tells you to stop.

### **Epilepsy:**

#### ***Adults and adolescents:***

Take the number of capsules as instructed. Your doctor will usually build up your dose gradually. The starting dose will generally be between 300 mg and 900 mg each day. Thereafter, the dose may be increased stepwise up to a maximum of 3600 mg each day and your doctor will tell you to take this in 3 divided doses, i.e. once in the morning, once in the afternoon and once in the evening.

#### ***Children aged 6 years and above:***

The dose to be given to your child will be decided by your doctor as it is calculated against your child's weight. The treatment is started with a low initial dose which is gradually increased over a

period of approximately 3 days. The usual dose to control epilepsy is 25-35 mg/kg/day. It is usually given in 3 divided doses, by taking the capsule(s) each day, usually once in the morning, once in the afternoon and once in the evening.

Gabapentin is not recommended for use in children below 6 years of age.

### **Peripheral Neuropathic Pain:**

#### **Adults:**

Take the number of capsules as instructed by your doctor. Your doctor will usually build up your dose gradually. The starting dose will generally be between 300 mg and 900 mg each day. Thereafter, the dose may be increased stepwise up to a maximum of 3600 mg each day and your doctor will tell you to take this in 3 divided doses, i.e. once in the morning, once in the afternoon and once in the evening.

### **If you have kidney problems or are receiving haemodialysis**

Your doctor may prescribe a different dosing schedule and/or dose if you have problems with your kidneys or are undergoing haemodialysis.

If you are an older patient (over 65 years of age), you should take Gabapentin normally except if you have problems with your kidneys.

Your doctor may prescribe a different dosing schedule and/or dose if you have problems with your kidneys.

### **If you take more Gabapentin than you should**

If you or someone else accidentally takes too many capsules, or if you think a child has swallowed any, contact your doctor or go to your nearest hospital casualty department immediately. As Gabapentin capsules may make you drowsy, it is recommended that you ask someone else to drive you to the doctor or hospital, or that you call an ambulance. Symptoms of an overdose are dizziness, double vision, slurred speech, loss of consciousness, drowsiness and mild diarrhoea.

### **If you forget to take Gabapentin**

If you forget to take a dose, take it as soon as you remember unless it is time for your next dose. Do not take a double dose to make up for a forgotten dose.

### **If you stop taking Gabapentin**

Do not stop taking Gabapentin unless your doctor tells you to. If your treatment is stopped it should be done gradually over a minimum of 1 week. If you stop taking Gabapentin suddenly or before your doctor tells you, there is an increased risk of seizures.

If you have any further questions on the use of this product, ask your doctor or pharmacist.

## **4. Possible side effects**

Like all medicines, this medicine can cause side effects, although not everybody gets them.

**Contact your doctor immediately if you experience any of the following symptoms after taking this medicine as they can be serious:**

- Severe skin reactions that require immediate medical attention, swelling of the lips and face, skin rash and redness, hair loss
- Persistent stomach pain, feeling sick and being sick as these may be symptoms of an inflamed pancreas
- Gabapentin may cause a serious or life-threatening allergic reaction that may affect your skin or other parts of your body such as your liver or blood cells. You may or may not have rash when you get this type of reaction. It may cause you to be hospitalized or to stop Gabapentin.

- Breathing problems, which if severe you may need emergency and intensive care to continue breathing normally

Call your doctor right away if you have any of the following symptoms:

- skin rash
- hives
- fever
- swollen glands that do not go away
- swelling of your lip and tongue
- yellowing of your skin or of the whites of the eyes
- unusual bruising or bleeding
- severe fatigue or weakness
- unexpected muscle pain
- frequent infections

These symptoms may be the first signs of a serious reaction. A doctor should examine you to decide if you should continue taking Gabapentin.

If you are on haemodialysis, tell your doctor if you develop muscle pain and/or weakness.

Other side effects include:

**Very common: may affect more than 1 in 10 people**

- Viral infection
- Feeling drowsy, dizziness, lack of coordination
- Feeling tired, fever

**Common: may affect up to 1 in 10 people**

- Pneumonia, respiratory infection, urinary tract infection, infection, inflammation of the ear
- Low white blood cell counts
- Loss of appetite, increased appetite
- Anger towards others, confusion, fluctuation in mood, depression, anxiety, nervousness, difficulty with thinking
- Convulsion, jerky movements, difficulty with speaking, loss of memory, tremor, difficulty sleeping, headache, sensitive skin, decreased sensation, difficulty with coordination, unusual eye movement, increased, decreased or absent reflexes
- Blurred vision, double vision
- Vertigo
- High blood pressure, flushing or dilation of blood vessels
- Difficulty breathing, bronchitis, sore throat, cough, dry nose
- Vomiting (being sick), nausea (feeling sick), problems with teeth, inflamed gums, diarrhoea, stomach pain, indigestion, constipation, dry mouth or throat, flatulence
- Facial swelling, bruises, rash, itch, acne
- Joint pain, muscle pain, back pain, twitching
- Difficulties with erection
- Swelling in the legs and arms, difficulty with walking, weakness, pain, feeling unwell, flu-like symptoms
- Decrease in white blood cells, increase in weight
- Accidental injury, fracture, abrasion

Additionally in clinical studies in children, aggressive behaviour and jerky movements were reported commonly.

**Uncommon: may affect up to 1 in 100 people**

- Allergic reaction such as hives
- Decreased movement
- Racing heartbeat
- Swelling that may involve the face, trunk and limbs
- Abnormal blood test results suggesting problems with the liver
- Difficulty with thinking
- Fall
- High blood sugar (most often observed in patients with diabetes)
- Agitation

**Rare: may affect up to 1 in 1,000 people**

- Loss of consciousness
- Low blood sugar (most often observed in patients with diabetes)
- Trouble breathing, shallow breaths (respiratory depression)

**Not known: frequency cannot be estimated from the available data**

- Hyponatraemia (low level of sodium in the blood)
- Anaphylaxis (serious, potentially life threatening allergic reaction including difficulty breathing, swelling of the lips, throat and tongue, and hypotension requiring emergency treatment)

**Since introduction to the market the following side-effects have been reported:**

- Decreased platelets (blood clotting cells)
- Hallucinations, thoughts of harming or killing yourself
- Problems with abnormal movements such as writhing, jerking movements and stiffness
- Ringing in the ears
- A group of side effects that could include swollen lymph nodes (isolated small raised lumps under the skin), fever, rash and inflammation of liver occurring together
- Yellowing of the skin and eyes, inflammation of the liver
- Muscle spasms
- Acute kidney failure, incontinence
- Increased breast tissue, breast enlargement
- Adverse events following the abrupt discontinuation of gabapentin (anxiety, difficulty sleeping, feeling sick, pain sweating), chest pain
- Blood glucose fluctuations in patients with diabetes
- Breakdown of muscle fibers (rhabdomyolysis)
- Change in blood test results (creatinine phosphokinase increased)
- Problems with sexual functioning including inability to achieve a sexual climax, delayed ejaculation.

**Reporting of side effects**

If you get any side effects, talk to your doctor or pharmacist. This includes any possible side effects not listed in this leaflet. You can also report side effects directly via HPRA Pharmacovigilance, Earlsfort Terrace, IRL-Dublin 2; Tel: +353 1 6764971; Fax: +353 1 6762517. Website: [www.hpra.ie](http://www.hpra.ie); Email: [medsafety@hpra.ie](mailto:medsafety@hpra.ie). By reporting side effects you can help provide more information on the safety of this medicine.

**5. How to store Gabapentin**

Keep this medicine out of the sight and reach of children.

Do not use this medicine after the expiry date which is stated on the carton and blister after EXP.

The expiry date refers to the last day of that month.

Do not store above 25°C.

Do not throw away any medicines via wastewater or household waste. Ask your pharmacist how to throw away medicines you no longer use. These measures will help to protect the environment.

## **6. Contents of the pack and other information**

### **What Gabapentin contains**

- The active substance is gabapentin. Each hard capsule contains 100 mg, 300 mg or 400 mg gabapentin.
- The other ingredients are: lactose anhydrous, maize starch, talc, gelatin, titanium dioxide (E171). The shell of the 300mg capsules also contains yellow iron oxide (E172), the 400mg capsules contain both yellow and red iron oxide (E172).

### **What Gabapentin looks like and contents of the pack**

Capsule, hard

100 mg

White opaque hard gelatin capsules, available in sales pack sizes of 10 and 100 capsules and a medical sample pack size of 10 capsules.

300 mg

Yellow opaque hard gelatin capsules, available in sales pack sizes of 10 and 100 capsules and a medical sample pack size of 10 capsules.

400 mg

Orange opaque hard gelatin capsules, in sales pack sizes of 10 and 100 capsules and a medical sample pack size of 10 capsules.

Not all pack sizes may be marketed.

### **Marketing Authorisation Holder and Manufacturers**

#### **Marketing Authorisation Holder**

Rowex® Ltd., Bantry, Co. Cork

#### **Manufacturers:**

Salutas Pharma GmbH, Otto-von-Guericke Allee 1, 39179 Barleben, Germany

Rowa Pharmaceuticals Ltd., Bantry, Co. Cork

Catalent Germany Schorndorf GmbH, Steinbeisstraße 2, 73614 Schorndorf, Germany

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