

## LEVETIRACETAM (KEPPRA)

Levetiracetam is FDA approved for adjunctive therapy for partial seizures. Like many other anti-seizure medications, it may be helpful in treating chronic neuropathic pain.

Levetiracetam comes in 500 mg tablets. The usual dose is 1000 mg twice a day. The medication is started at a low dose and slowly raised to a dose that is effective without serious side-effects.

You should begin by taking Levetiracetam 250 mg per day. The 500 mg pill can be divided in half to do this: it is "scored" in the middle. The medication is started at bedtime.

Then in weekly intervals, increase the dose by 250 mg on a twice a day schedule. Thus, the second week would be 250 mg morning and night; the third week, 250 mg morning and 500 mg bedtime; and the fourth week 500 mg morning and night.

If you still need more medication to control your pain and you are not having serious side-effects, you can increase the total daily dose to 1500mg (500 mg morning and 1000 mg night) and then the next week to 2000mg/day (1000 mg twice a day).

Further increases may be made, but only after you get to 2000 mg/day without good effects or bad side-effects.

If you find a dosage level that is satisfactory, there is no reason to increase the medication. If, after you have increased the medication, you find that the previous -- that is, lower--dose was just as effective, it would be better to use the lower dose.

		Number of Pills (500 mg)		
	Insert date	Morning	Night	Notes
Begin			½	
After 7 days		½	½	
After 7 days		½	1	
After 7 days		1	1	Call your doctor
After 7 days		1	2	
After 7 days		2	2	Call your doctor

Possible side effects with Levetiracetam include sleepiness, fatigue, weakness, headache, pain, double vision, dizziness, coordination difficulties, runny nose or cough, increased infections, memory difficulties, anxiety, and behavioral problems including psychosis.

If you need to stop the drug, you should do so by reducing by 1 tablet each day until you are off the medicine.

No blood monitoring is needed while on Levetiracetam.

More information is available at [www.keppra.com](http://www.keppra.com).

**LEVETIRACETAM (By mouth)**  
**Levetiracetam (lee-ve-tye-RA-se-tam)**

**Treats seizures that are caused by epilepsy. This medicine is an antiepileptic.**

**Brand Name(s): Keppra**

There may be other brand names for this medicine.

**When This Medicine Should Not Be Used:**

You should not use this medicine if you have had an allergic reaction to levetiracetam.

**How to Use This Medicine:**

**Tablet, Liquid**

- Your doctor will tell you how much of this medicine to use and how often. Your dose may need to be changed several times in order to find out what works best for you. Do not use more medicine or use it more often than your doctor tells you to.
- You may take this medicine with or without food.
- Measure the oral liquid medicine with a marked measuring spoon, oral syringe, or medicine cup.

**If a dose is missed:**

- If you miss a dose or forget to use your medicine, use it as soon as you can. If it is almost time for your next dose, wait until then to use the medicine and skip the missed dose. Do not use extra medicine to make up for a missed dose.
- Try to take your medicine at the same time each day.

**How to Store and Dispose of This Medicine:**

- Store the medicine in a closed container at room temperature, away from heat, moisture, and direct light.
- Ask your pharmacist, doctor, or health caregiver about the best way to dispose of any leftover medicine after you have finished your treatment. You will also need to throw away old medicine after the expiration date has passed.
- Keep all medicine away from children and never share your medicine with anyone.

**Drugs and Foods to Avoid:**

**Ask your doctor or pharmacist before using any other medicine, including over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal products.**

- Make sure your doctor knows if you are also taking other medicines to treat or prevent seizures.

**Warnings While Using This Medicine:**

- Make sure your doctor knows if you are pregnant, or if you plan to become pregnant while using the medicine. You should not breast feed while you are using this medicine.
- Tell your doctor if you have kidney disease or if you are on dialysis.
- Do not stop using this medicine suddenly without asking your doctor. You may need to slowly decrease your dose before stopping it completely.
- This medicine may make you dizzy or drowsy. Avoid driving, using machines, or doing anything else that could be dangerous if you are not alert.
- Make sure any doctor or dentist who treats you knows that you are using this medicine. This medicine may affect the results of certain medical tests.

**Possible Side Effects While Using This Medicine:****Call your doctor right away if you notice any of these side effects:**

- Allergic reaction: Itching or hives, swelling in your face or hands, swelling or tingling in your mouth or throat, chest tightness, trouble breathing.
- Chest pain.
- Extreme weakness or drowsiness.
- Fever, chills, sore throat, cough, or body aches.
- Hallucinations, thoughts of hurting yourself or others.
- Increase in seizures.
- Problems with walking, balance, or coordination.
- Unusual thoughts, mood, or behavior.
- Unusual bleeding, bruising, or weakness.

**If you notice these less serious side effects, talk with your doctor:**

- Anxiety, agitation, depression, or anger.
- Feeling weak, confused, irritable, or sleepy.
- Loss of appetite.
- Nausea or vomiting.
- Runny or stuffy nose.
- Weight gain.

**If you notice other side effects that you think are caused by this medicine, tell your doctor.**

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