

# valproic-acid (valproic acid) basics

**Treats and prevents seizures.** valproic-acid (valproic acid) is good for treating certain types of seizures, but can cause weight change and hair loss.

## What to expect when starting

Here's when people typically experience benefits as well as some possible side effects. Your experience may be different.



\* Placebo is a sugar pill with no medicinal benefit.

## Tips from pharmacists

- Take with food to avoid upset stomach. Swallow the pill whole.
- If using the liquid form, measure liquid doses carefully. Use the measuring device that comes with this drug.
- Avoid activities that require you to be alert until you know how this drug affects you.
- Different versions of valproic-acid (valproic acid) have different dosing. Check with your doctor to make sure you know how to take valproic-acid (valproic acid).
- Do not stop this drug suddenly as it may increase your chance of getting a seizure.
- Talk with your doctor before you drink alcohol or use other drugs and natural products that slow your actions.

## Risks and warnings

The FDA has identified these as possible serious or life-threatening risks with this medication. Contact your doctor if you experience any of these.

### Pregnancy

valproic-acid (valproic acid) can cause harm to the unborn baby if you take it while you are pregnant. If you're pregnant or thinking about getting pregnant, talk to your doctor about alternatives.

### Liver damage

valproic-acid (valproic acid) can cause liver damage, usually during the first 6 months of treatment. Your doctor will monitor your liver with routine blood tests. Call your doctor immediately if you notice any tiredness, loss of appetite, upset stomach, vomiting, increased seizures, or yellowing of the skin or eyes.

### Pancreas problems

valproic-acid (valproic acid) can cause pancreas problems (pancreatitis) for both children and adults. This can happen at any time while taking the medication and it can lead to hospitalization or death. Call your doctor right away if you notice any belly pain, upset stomach, nausea, vomiting, or inability to eat.