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Lacosamide for epilepsy (Vimpat)

Lacosamide is prescribed alongside other anti-epilepsy medicines.

Take it twice a day. Try not to miss any doses.

The most common side-effects are feeling dizzy, feeling sick (nausea), headache and blurred vision.

About lacosamide

Type of medicine	An anti-epileptic medicine
Used for	Epilepsy with focal seizures, in adults and in children aged over 2 years
Also called	Vimpat®
Available as	Tablets, oral liquid medicine and injection

Lacosamide is used alongside other medicines in the treatment of **focal seizures, which are a type of epilepsy**. A seizure is a short episode of symptoms which is caused by a burst of abnormal electrical activity in the brain. With a focal seizure, the burst of electrical activity stays in one part of the brain and therefore you tend to have localised or 'focal' symptoms. Because different parts of the brain control different functions, your symptoms will depend on which part of your brain is affected. Focal seizures can sometimes develop into seizures which affect all of your brain. These are called secondary generalised seizures.

Lacosamide is prescribed for people who have focal seizures, which may or may not be followed by secondary generalised seizures. It is prescribed alongside other anti-epilepsy medicines. It works by stabilising the electrical activity in your brain.

Before taking lacosamide

Some medicines are not suitable for people with certain conditions, and sometimes a medicine can only be used if extra care is taken. For these reasons, before you start taking lacosamide it is important that your doctor knows:

- If you are pregnant, trying for a baby or breastfeeding.
- If you have a heart rhythm disorder.
- If you have any problems with the way your liver works, or if you have any problems with the way your kidneys work.
- If you are taking or using any other medicines. This includes any medicines you are taking which are available to buy without a prescription, as well as herbal and complementary medicines.
- If you have ever had an allergic reaction to a medicine.

How to take lacosamide

- Before you start the treatment, read the manufacturer's printed information leaflet from inside the pack. It will give you more information about lacosamide, and will also provide you with a full list of the side-effects which you could experience from taking it.
- Take lacosamide exactly as your doctor tells you to. You will be asked to take two doses daily, one dose in the morning and one in the evening. It is likely that you will be prescribed a low dose when you first start taking it, and then your dose will be increased as your body gets used to it. Your doctor or pharmacist will explain this to you, and directions will also be printed on the label of the pack to remind you about what the doctor said to you.
- You can take lacosamide either with or without meals. Swallow the tablet with a drink of water.

- If you forget to take a dose at your usual time, take it as soon as you remember unless it is within six hours of your next dose, in which case leave out the missed dose. Make sure you take the next dose when it is due. Do not take two doses together to make up for a forgotten dose.

Getting the most from your treatment

- Try to keep your regular appointments with your doctor. This is so your doctor can check on your progress.
- When you first start a new treatment for epilepsy there may be a change in the number or type of seizures you experience. Your doctor will advise you about this.
- Lacosamide can make you feel dizzy, especially when you first start treatment. Take care that you do not fall or trip when moving around.
- Drinking alcohol while you are on lacosamide can increase feelings of dizziness and may not be recommended for you. Ask for your doctor's advice.
- While you are being treated for epilepsy there is a small risk that you may develop mood changes, distressing thoughts and feelings about suicide. If this happens, you must tell your doctor about it straightaway.
- People with epilepsy must stop driving at first. Your doctor will advise you about if and when it may be possible for you to resume driving again.
- Many anti-epileptic medicines can harm an unborn child. If you are a woman, make sure you have discussed with your doctor which types of contraception are suitable for you and your partner. If you want to have a family, discuss this with your doctor so that you can be given advice from a specialist **before** you become pregnant.
- You need to take lacosamide regularly every day. Do not stop taking it unless your doctor tells you to stop. Stopping treatment suddenly can cause problems and your doctor will want you to reduce your dose gradually if this becomes necessary.

Can lacosamide cause problems?

Along with their useful effects, most medicines can cause unwanted side-effects although not everyone experiences them. The table below contains some of the more common ones associated with lacosamide. The best place to find a full list of the side-effects which can be associated with your medicine, is from the manufacturer's printed information leaflet supplied with the medicine. Alternatively, you can find an example of a manufacturer's information leaflet in the reference section below. Speak with your doctor or pharmacist if any of the following continue or become troublesome.

Common lacosamide side-effects	What can I do if I experience this?
Feeling dizzy, sleepy, tired or unsteady; double vision	Take care that you do not fall or trip when moving around. Do not drive and do not use tools or machines
Headache	Drink plenty of water and ask a pharmacist to recommend a suitable painkiller. If the headaches continue, let your doctor know
Feeling sick (nausea), constipation, wind	Stick to simple foods - avoid fatty or spicy meals
Changes in mood, difficulties thinking, poor co-ordination, feeling shaky, unusual eye movements	If any of these become troublesome, discuss them with your doctor

If you experience any other symptoms which you think may be due to the medicine, speak with your doctor or pharmacist for further advice.

How to store lacosamide

- Keep all medicines out of the reach and sight of children.

- Store in a cool, dry place, away from direct heat and light.
- Once a bottle of Vimpat® Syrup has been opened, it will keep for four weeks. After this time, make sure you have a fresh supply.

Important information about all medicines

Never take more than the prescribed dose. If you suspect that you or someone else might have taken an overdose of this medicine, go to the accident and emergency department of your local hospital at once. Take the container with you, even if it is empty, so the doctor knows what has been taken.

This medicine is for you. Never give it to other people even if their condition appears to be the same as yours.

If you are due to have an operation or any dental treatment, please tell the person carrying out the treatment which medicines you are taking.

If you buy any medicines, check with a pharmacist that they are safe to take with your prescribed medicines.

Do not keep out-of-date or unwanted medicines. Take them to your local pharmacy which will dispose of them for you.

If you have any questions about this medicine ask your pharmacist.

If you experience side effects, you can report them online through the [Yellow Card website](#).

Further reading

- [Manufacturer's PIL, Vimpat® 50 mg, 100 mg, 150 mg and 200 mg film-coated tablets](#); UCB Pharma Limited, The electronic Medicines Compendium. Dated June 2022.
- [Manufacturer's PIL, Vimpat® 10 mg/ml syrup](#); UCB Pharma Limited, The electronic Medicines Compendium. Dated June 2022.
- [Medicines Complete BNF 88th Edition](#); British Medical Association and Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain, London.

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