



ADULT MEDICATION GUIDELINE

Sodium Valproate

Scope (Staff): All WNHS Staff

Scope (Area): Obstetrics and Gynaecology

This document should be read in conjunction with the [Disclaimer](#).

Quick Links

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[Pregnancy and Breastfeeding](#)

Restrictions

Injection: [Formulary: Restricted](#)

Others: [Formulary: Unrestricted](#)

Medication Class

Antiepileptic

Presentation

Tablet (crushable): 100mg

Tablet (enteric coated): 200mg, 500mg

Oral liquid: 40mg/mL (sugar free)

Vial: 400mg (powder and solvent)

Storage

Store at room temperature, below 25°C. Tablets are hygroscopic and must be kept in protective foil until taken.

Dose

Epilepsy and bipolar disorder

Oral:

600mg daily in 2 doses; increase every 3 days by 200mg daily according to response.

Maintenance dose is 1-2g daily in 2 doses.

Prevention of migraine

Oral:

200mg to 400mg twice daily

Neuropathic pain in the palliative care setting

Discuss with palliative care specialist.

Administration

Oral

Take with or soon after food. Swallow enteric coated tablets whole.

IV

Refer to the [Australian Injectable Drugs Handbook](#)

IM

Contraindicated. Tissue necrosis can occur.

Monitoring

- There is poor correlation between therapeutic efficacy and plasma concentration but concentrations may be useful to confirm toxicity or compliance. Measure as trough plasma concentration. Steady-state concentration may be achieved after 3–5 days.
- Check complete blood count (including platelets) before starting treatment.
- Sodium valproate appears to reduce BMD and may increase fracture risk; consider BMD monitoring during long-term treatment and ensure vitamin D status and calcium intake are adequate.

Pregnancy

There is evidence of substantial increases in absolute risk of major malformation and cardiac malformation in the newborn.

There is evidence of adverse cognitive outcomes in the child including below average IQ, higher rates of ASD.

DO NOT prescribe sodium valproate to women who are planning a pregnancy or pregnant.

Once a decision to conceive is made, wean off valproate over 2-4 weeks, adding a high dose folic acid 5mg for the first trimester.

The European Medicines Agency has banned the use during pregnancy of valproate medicines for migraine or bipolar disorder, or for the treatment of epilepsy unless there is no other effective

treatment available. For further information, visit the European Medicines Agency [website](#) or contact then [KEMH Obstetric Medicines Information Service](#).

Breastfeeding

Monitoring required. For more information, please contact [KEMH Obstetric Medicines Information Service](#).

Related Policies, Procedures & Guidelines

External Guidelines:

[Epilepsy in pregnancy \(RCOG\)](#)

[European Medicines Agency](#)

WNHS Clinical Practice Guidelines:

[Women's and Perinatal Mental Health Referral and management](#)

[Use of Psychotropic Medications in Pregnancy](#)

[Childbirth and Mental Illness Clinic \(CAMI\)](#)

[Palliative Care](#)









References

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Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia. Sodium valproate. In: Australian Injectable Drugs Handbook [Internet]. [St Leonards, New South Wales]: Health Communication Network; 2021 [cited 2021 May 26]. Available from: <http://aidh.hcn.com.au>

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