



## Tiagabine for preventing seizures

This leaflet is about the use of tiagabine to prevent epileptic seizures. (Seizures may also be called convulsions or fits.)

This leaflet has been written specifically about the use of this medicine in children. The information may differ from that provided by the manufacturer. Please read this leaflet carefully. Keep it somewhere safe so that you can read it again.

Do not stop giving tiagabine suddenly, as your child may have more seizures.

### Name of drug

**Tiagabine**

**Brand names:** Gabitril®

### Why is it important for my child to take this medicine?

It is important that your child takes tiagabine regularly so that they have fewer seizures.

### What is tiagabine available as?

- **Tablets:** 5 mg, 10 mg, 15 mg

### When should I give tiagabine?


Tiagabine is usually given **twice** each day, but can be given **three times** each day. Your doctor will tell you how often to give it.

- **Twice a day:** this should be once in the morning and once in the evening. Ideally, these times are 10–12 hours apart, for example some time between 7 and 8 am, and between 7 and 8 pm.
- **Three times each day:** this should be once in the morning, once in the early afternoon and once in the evening. Ideally, these times are at least 6 hours apart, for example 8 am, 2 pm and 8 pm.

### How much should I give?

Your doctor will work out the amount of tiagabine (the dose) that is right for *your* child. The dose will be shown on the medicine label.

When you first start giving tiagabine to your child, you will give them a small amount and then increase the dose bit by bit over a few days or weeks. This helps your child to get used to the medicine. Your doctor will explain what to do.

 **It is important that you follow your doctor's instructions about how much to give.**

### How should I give it?



**Tablets:** These should be swallowed with a glass of water, milk or juice. Your child should not chew the tablet.

You can crush the tablet and mix it with a small amount of soft food such as yogurt, honey or jam. Make sure your child swallows it straight away, without chewing.

### When should the medicine start working?

It may take a few weeks for tiagabine to work properly, so your child may still have seizures during this time. This is because the amount of medicine has to be increased slowly. Continue to give the medicine as you have been told to by your doctor.

### What if my child is sick (vomits)?

- If your child is sick less than 30 minutes after having a dose of tiagabine, give them the same dose again.
- If your child is sick more than 30 minutes after having a dose of tiagabine, you **do not** need to give them another dose. Wait until the next normal dose.

### What if I forget to give it?

#### If you usually give it twice a day

If you remember up to 4 hours after you should have given a dose, give your child the missed dose. For example, if you usually give a dose at about 7 am, you can give the missed dose at any time up to 11 am. If you remember after that time, do not give the missed dose. Just give the next dose as usual.

#### If you usually give it three times a day

Do not give the missed dose. Just give the next dose as usual.

 **Never give a double dose of tiagabine.**

### What if I give too much?

If you think you may have given your child too much tiagabine, contact your doctor or NHS Direct (0845 4647 in England and Wales; 08454 24 24 24 in Scotland) or take your child to hospital.

Take the medicine container or packaging with you, even if it is empty. This will be useful to the doctor. Have the medicine or packaging with you if you telephone for advice.

### Are there any possible side-effects?

We use medicines to make our children better, but sometimes they have other effects that we don't want (side-effects).

Your child may get some of the following side-effects when they first start taking tiagabine. They are usually mild and should wear off after a few days as your child gets used to the medicine. If they are still a problem after 2 weeks, or you are worried, contact your doctor, but continue to give tiagabine.

- Your child may feel dizzy or lightheaded.
- They may feel sleepy, drowsy or sluggish or have mood changes and get upset easily.
- They may have problems with their speech or seem less alert than usual and say that they cannot think clearly.
- They may have diarrhoea. If it is severe and watery contact your doctor.

There may, sometimes, be other side-effects that are not listed above. If you notice anything unusual and are concerned, contact your doctor.

### Can other medicines be given at the same time as tiagabine?

- You can give your child medicines that contain paracetamol or ibuprofen, unless your doctor has told you not to.
- Check with your doctor or pharmacist before giving any other medicines to your child. This includes herbal or complementary medicines.




### Epilepsy and pregnancy


- Pregnancy presents a risk to both the mother with epilepsy and her unborn baby. If your daughter has sex, it is essential that she uses adequate contraception to prevent an unplanned pregnancy.
- If your daughter thinks that she may be pregnant, it is important that she sees your family doctor as early as possible. Your daughter should keep taking her medicine until she sees her doctor.

### Tiagabine and pregnancy

- Doctors don't yet know whether tiagabine can harm an unborn baby.
- The oral contraceptive pill can be used safely by women or girls who are taking tiagabine.

### General advice about medicines for seizures

-  **Do not** suddenly stop giving any of these medicines to your child, as they may have a seizure. If you are worried, talk to your doctor but carry on giving the medicine to your child as usual.
-  If your child seems to have more seizures than usual, contact your doctor or epilepsy nurse.
  - If your doctor decides to stop a particular medicine, they will discuss this with you. You will usually reduce the dose bit by bit.
-  Do not change the dose of any drug without talking to your doctor first.
  - Try to give medicines at about the same times every day, to help you remember.
  - If you are not sure a medicine is working, contact your doctor but continue to give the medicine as usual in the meantime. Do not give extra doses as you may do harm.
  - Only give the medicine(s) to *your* child. Never give them to anyone else, even if their condition appears to be the same, as this could do harm.

 If you think someone else may have taken the medicine by accident, contact your doctor straight away.

- Make sure that you always have enough medicine. Order a new prescription at least 2 weeks before you will run out.
- Make sure that the medicines you have at home have not reached the 'best before' or 'use by' date on the packaging. Give old medicines to your pharmacist to dispose of.

### Where should I keep this medicine?

- Keep the medicine in a cupboard, away from heat and direct sunlight. It does not need to be kept in the fridge.
- Make sure that children cannot see or reach the medicine.
- Keep the medicine in the container it came in.

### Who to contact for more information

Your doctor, epilepsy nurse or pharmacist will be able to give you more information about tiagabine and about other medicines used to treat seizures.

You can also get useful information from:

#### NHS Direct (England)

0845 46 47  
[www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk](http://www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk)

#### NHS 24 (Scotland)

08454 24 24 24  
[www.nhs24.com](http://www.nhs24.com)

#### NHS Direct (Wales/Galw Iechyd Cymru)

0845 46 47  
[www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk](http://www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk)

#### NI Direct (Northern Ireland)

[www.nidirect.gov.uk](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk)

#### Young Epilepsy

Helpline: 01342 831 342  
[www.youngepilepsy.org.uk](http://www.youngepilepsy.org.uk)

#### Epilepsy Society

Helpline: 01494 601 400  
[www.epilepsysociety.org.uk](http://www.epilepsysociety.org.uk)

#### Epilepsy Action

Helpline: 0808 800 5050  
[www.epilepsy.org.uk](http://www.epilepsy.org.uk)