



Carbamazepine suppositories for preventing seizures

This leaflet is for parents and carers about how to use this medicine in children. Our information sometimes differs from that provided by the manufacturers, because their information is usually for adults. Read this leaflet carefully. Keep it somewhere safe so that you can read it again.

Do not give your child carbamazepine tablets or liquid medicine while they are having suppositories.

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

Name of medicine

Carbamazepine

Why is it important for my child to have this medicine?

Carbamazepine suppositories are used for short periods (up to 7 days) if a child cannot take carbamazepine by mouth. It is important that your child has carbamazepine regularly so that they have fewer seizures.

What is carbamazepine available as?

- **Suppositories:** 125 mg, 250 mg
- Carbamazepine is also available as tablets and liquid medicine. These are described in a separate [leaflet](#) on our website.

When should I use carbamazepine suppositories?

Carbamazepine suppositories can be used up to four times a day. Your doctor will tell you how often to use them.

- If they are to be used **twice** each day, these times should be in the morning and in the evening. Ideally these times are 10–12 hours apart. For example, this could be between 7 and 8 am and between 7 and 8 pm.
- If they are to be used **three times each day**, these times should be about 6 hours apart, depending on what time your child wakes up and goes to bed. For example, this could be between 7 and 8 am, between 1 and 2 pm, and between 7 and 8 pm.
- If they are to be used **four times each day**, these times should be 4–5 hours apart, depending on what time your child wakes up and goes to bed. For example, this could be between 7 and 8 am, between 11 am and 12 pm, between 2 and 3 pm and between 7 and 8 pm.


Try to use the suppositories at about the same time(s) each day so that this becomes part of your child's daily routine, which will help you to remember.

How much should I give?

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

How are suppositories used?

Suppositories are inserted through the anus (back passage) into the rectum. A leaflet explaining [How to insert suppositories](#) can be found on our website.

 Never give suppositories by mouth.

When should the medicine start to work?

The suppositories work in the same way as carbamazepine tablets or liquid medicine and should continue to prevent or reduce your child's seizures.

What if my child is sick (vomits)?

You do not need to worry if your child is sick, as the suppository will still work.

What if I forget to insert a suppository?

If you usually give it twice a day

If you remember within 4 hours, give your child the missed dose. For example, if you usually give a dose at 7 am, you can give the missed dose at any time up to 11 am. If you remember after this time, do not give the missed dose. Wait until it is time to give the next normal dose.

If you usually give it three or four times a day

You do not need to give the missed dose. Give the next dose as normal.

What if I give too much?

You are unlikely to do any harm if you give an extra dose of carbamazepine by mistake. If you think you may have given your child too much carbamazepine, contact your doctor or local NHS services (details at end of leaflet).

Take the medicine container or packaging with you, even if it is empty. This will be useful to the doctor. Have the 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 cause effects that we don't want (side-effects).

If your child is having carbamazepine suppositories instead of liquid medicine or tablets, they are unlikely to get new side-effects.

Side-effects you must do something about

These side-effects are unlikely if your child has already been taking carbamazepine tablets or liquid medicine.



If your child has a rash and is also generally unwell and has a fever (temperature above 38°C), unusual bruises or bleeding, take them to hospital, as this may indicate a serious reaction.



If your child develops a blotchy red skin rash, contact your doctor **straight away**, as your child may be allergic to carbamazepine. The rash may be anywhere on the body, and you may also see blisters in the mouth.



Carbamazepine occasionally affects the blood. If your child seems to be getting more infections

than usual (e.g. bad colds, chest or skin infections, stomach upsets), they seem to bruise more easily or bleeding doesn't stop as quickly as you would expect, contact your doctor straight away.

Other side-effects you need to know about

- Carbamazepine suppositories may irritate your child's bottom.
- There may sometimes be other side-effects that are not listed above. If you notice anything unusual and are concerned, contact your doctor. You can report any suspected side-effects to a UK safety scheme at mhra.gov.uk/yellowcard.
- More information on side-effects can be found in a [leaflet](#) on our website.

Can other medicines be given at the same time as using carbamazepine suppositories?

- You can give your child medicines that contain ibuprofen or paracetamol, unless your doctor has told you not to.
- Carbamazepine should not be taken with some common drugs that you get on prescription. It is important to tell your doctor and pharmacist that your child is taking carbamazepine.
- Check with your doctor or pharmacist before giving any other medicines to your child. This includes herbal and complementary medicines.

Epilepsy and pregnancy

- If your daughter has sex, it is essential that she uses adequate contraception to prevent pregnancy, as pregnancy presents a risk to both the mother with epilepsy and her unborn baby.
- 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 epilepsy medicine(s) until she sees her doctor.
- If your daughter wants to have a baby, she should talk to her doctor about her plans and how best to manage this.

Carbamazepine and pregnancy

- Carbamazepine may harm an unborn baby.
- The oral contraceptive pill may not work properly in women or girls who are taking carbamazepine.

Is there anything else I need to know about this medicine?

- Carbamazepine suppositories are usually used for short periods only (up to 7 days) if a child cannot take liquid medicine or tablets.
- Carbamazepine can make some types of epilepsy worse (absence seizures and myoclonic seizures). If you think your child's seizures are becoming worse, contact your doctor or epilepsy nurse.

General advice about medicines for seizures



Do not suddenly stop giving any of these medicines, as your child may have a seizure. If you are worried, contact your doctor but carry on giving the medicine 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 slowly reduce the dose or number of suppositories per day.



Do not change the dose of any medicine without talking to your doctor first.

- It is best that your child always has the same brand of each medicine, as there may be differences between brands. Keep a record of which medicines your child has.
- Try to give medicines at about the same times each day, to help you remember.
- Only give this medicine to your child. Never give it 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 medicine you have at home has 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, pharmacist or nurse will be able to give you more information about carbamazepine suppositories and other medicines used to treat epilepsy. You can also get useful information from:

England: NHS 111 Tel 111 nhs.uk

Scotland: NHS 24 Tel 111 nhs24.com

Wales: NHS 111 Wales Tel 111 111.wales.nhs.uk

Northern Ireland: NI Direct nidirect.gov.uk

Young Epilepsy 01342 832 243 youngepilepsy.org.uk

Epilepsy Society 01494 601 400 epilepsysociety.org.uk

Epilepsy Action 0808 800 5050 epilepsy.org.uk

www.medicinesforchildren.org.uk