



# Lamictal

**Generic Name:** lamotrigine (la MOE tri jeen)

**Brand Names:** *LaMICtal*, *LaMICtal ODT*, *LaMICtal XR*

## What is Lamictal?

Lamictal (lamotrigine) is an anti-epileptic medication, also called an anticonvulsant.

Lamictal is used either alone or in combination with other medications to treat epileptic seizures in adults and children. Lamotrigine is also used to delay mood episodes in adults with bipolar disorder (manic depression).

The immediate-release form of Lamictal (regular tablet and orally disintegrating tablet) can be used in children as young as 2 years old when it is given as part of a combination of seizure medications. However, this form should not be used as a single medication in a child or teenager who is younger than 16 years old.

The extended-release form of lamotrigine (Lamictal XR) is for use only in adults and children who are at least 13 years old.

## Important information

Lamictal may cause a severe or life-threatening skin rash, especially in children and in people who take too high of a starting a dose, or those who also take valproic acid (Depakene) or divalproex (Depakote).

Seek emergency medical attention if you have: fever, sore throat, swelling in your face or tongue, burning in your eyes, skin pain, followed by a red or purple skin rash that spreads (especially in the face or upper body) and causes blistering and peeling.

You may have thoughts about suicide while taking this medication. Your doctor will need to check you at regular visits while you are using Lamictal. Report any new or worsening symptoms to your doctor, such as: mood or behavior changes, depression, anxiety, or if you feel agitated, hostile, restless, hyperactive (mentally or physically), or have thoughts about suicide or hurting yourself.

Do not stop taking Lamictal without first talking to your doctor, even if you feel fine. You may have increased seizures if you stop using Lamictal suddenly. Contact your doctor if your seizures get worse or you have them more often while taking this medicine. Taking this medication during early pregnancy can increase the risk of the baby being born with cleft lip or cleft palate. Tell your doctor if you are pregnant or if you become pregnant during treatment.

## Before taking this medicine

You should not take Lamictal if you are allergic to lamotrigine.

Lamictal may cause a severe or life-threatening skin rash, especially in children and in people who take too high a dose at the start of treatment. Serious skin rash may also be more likely to occur if you are taking lamotrigine together with valproic acid (Depakene) or divalproex (Depakote).

To make sure Lamictal is safe for you, tell your doctor if you have:

- kidney or liver disease;
- a history of depression or suicidal thoughts or actions; or
- if you are allergic to other seizure medications.

Some people have thoughts about suicide while taking this medicine. Your doctor will need to check your progress at regular visits while you are using Lamictal. Your family or other caregivers should also be alert to changes in your mood or symptoms.

Do not start or stop taking Lamictal during pregnancy without your doctor's advice. Having a seizure during pregnancy could harm both mother and baby. Tell your doctor right away if you become pregnant.

If you are pregnant, your name may be listed on a pregnancy registry. This is to track the outcome of the pregnancy and to evaluate any effects of Lamictal on the baby.

Birth control pills can make Lamictal less effective, resulting in increased seizures. **Tell your doctor if you start or stop using birth control pills while you are taking this medicine.** Your lamotrigine dose may need to be changed.

Lamotrigine can pass into breast milk and may harm a nursing baby. Tell your doctor if you are breast-feeding a baby.

## How should I take Lamictal?

Take Lamictal exactly as prescribed by your doctor. Follow all directions on your prescription label. Your doctor may occasionally change your dose to make sure you get the best results. Do not take this medicine in larger or smaller amounts or for longer than recommended.

**Taking too much Lamictal at the start of treatment may increase your risk of a severe life-threatening skin rash.**

You may need frequent blood tests to help your doctor make sure you are taking the right dose.

**Extended-release** Lamictal XR may be used for different conditions than **immediate-release** Lamictal is used for. Always check your refills to make sure you have received the correct size, color, and shape of tablet. Ask the pharmacist if you have any questions about the medicine you receive at the pharmacy.

If you switch to Lamictal from another seizure medicine, carefully follow your doctor's instructions about the timing and dosage of your medications. Read all patient information, medication guides, and instruction sheets provided to you. Ask your doctor or pharmacist if you have any questions.

Do not crush, chew, or break an **extended-release Lamictal XR tablet**. Swallow the tablet whole.

Do not swallow the orally disintegrating tablet (ODT) whole. Place it on your tongue and move it around in your mouth. Allow the tablet to dissolve in your mouth without chewing. Swallow several times as the tablet dissolves. If desired, you may drink liquid to help swallow the dissolved tablet.

To take the chewable dispersible tablet, you may either swallow it whole with a glass of water, or chew it first and then swallow it. You may also place the tablet into 1 teaspoon of water or diluted fruit juice and allow it to disperse in the liquid for about 1 minute. Gently swirl the liquid and then swallow all of the mixture right away. Do not save it for later use.

Do not stop using Lamictal suddenly, even if you feel fine. Stopping suddenly may cause increased seizures. Follow your doctor's instructions about tapering your dose.

Wear a medical alert tag or carry an ID card stating that you take Lamictal. Any medical care provider who treats you should know that you take seizure medication.

Lamictal can cause you to have a false positive drug screening test. If you provide a urine sample for drug screening, tell the laboratory staff that you are taking lamotrigine.

Use this medicine regularly to get the most benefit. Get your prescription refilled before you run out of medicine completely.

Store at room temperature away from light and moisture.

**See also: Dosage Information (in more detail)**

## What happens if I miss a dose?

Take the missed dose as soon as you remember. Skip the missed dose if it is almost time for your next scheduled dose. Do not take extra medicine to make up the missed dose.

## What happens if I overdose?

Seek emergency medical attention or call the Poison Help line at 1-800-222-1222.

Overdose symptoms may include blurred vision, problems with coordination, increased seizures, feeling light-headed, or fainting.

## What should I avoid while taking Lamictal?

Lamictal may cause blurred vision or impair your thinking or reactions. Be careful if you drive or do anything that requires you to be alert and able to see clearly.

## Lamictal side effects

Get emergency medical help if you have any **signs of an allergic reaction to Lamictal**: hives; fever; swollen glands; painful sores in or around your eyes or mouth; difficulty breathing; swelling of your face, lips, tongue, or throat.

Seek emergency medical attention if you have **signs of a life-threatening skin rash**: fever, sore throat, swelling in your face or tongue, burning in your eyes, skin pain, followed by a red or purple skin rash that spreads (especially in the face or upper body) and causes blistering and peeling.

If you have to stop taking Lamictal because of a serious skin rash, you may not be able to take it again in the future.

Report any new or worsening symptoms to your doctor, such as: mood or behavior changes, depression, anxiety, or if you feel agitated, hostile, restless, hyperactive (mentally or physically), or have thoughts about suicide or hurting yourself.

Call your doctor at once if you have:

- the first sign of any skin rash, no matter how mild;
- changes in your menstrual periods;
- low blood cell counts - flu-like symptoms, swollen gums, mouth sores, skin sores, rapid heart rate, pale skin, easy bruising, unusual bleeding, feeling light-headed;
- possible signs of brain inflammation - fever, chills, headache, neck stiffness, increased sensitivity to light, purple spots on the skin, confusion, drowsiness; or
- signs of inflammation in your body - swollen glands, severe tingling or numbness, muscle weakness, upper stomach pain, jaundice (yellowing of the skin or eyes), chest pain, new or worsening cough with fever, trouble breathing.

Common Lamictal side effects may include:

- headache, dizziness;
- blurred vision, double vision;
- tremor, loss of coordination;
- dry mouth, nausea, vomiting, stomach pain, diarrhea;
- fever, sore throat, runny nose;
- drowsiness, tired feeling;
- back pain; or
- sleep problems (insomnia).

This is not a complete list of side effects and others may occur. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.

**See also: Side effects (in more detail)**

## What other drugs will affect Lamictal?

Other drugs may interact with lamotrigine, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal products.

Tell your doctor about all other medicines you use, especially:

- hormonal forms of birth control (pills, injections, implants, or skin patches);
- carbamazepine (Carbatrol, Equetro, Tegretol);
- divalproex (Depakote);
- oxcarbazepine (Trileptal);
- phenobarbital (Solfoton);
- primidone (Mysoline);
- phenytoin (Dilantin);
- rifampin (Rifadin, Rifater, Rifamate, Rimactane); or
- valproic acid (Depakene, Stavzor).

This list is not complete and other drugs may interact with Lamictal. Tell your doctor about all medications you use. Do not start a new medication without telling your doctor.

## Where can I get more information?

- Your pharmacist can provide more information about Lamictal.
- Remember, keep this and all other medicines out of the reach of children, never share your medicines with others, and use this medication only for the indication prescribed.
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