



Keppra

Generic Name: levetiracetam (LEE ve tye RA se tam)

Brand Names: *Keppra, Keppra XR, Roweepra, Spritam*

What is Keppra?

Keppra (levetiracetam) is an anti-epileptic drug, also called an **anticonvulsant**.

Keppra is used as adjunctive therapy to treat partial onset seizures in adults and children 1 month of age and older with epilepsy.

Keppra is also used to treat tonic-clonic seizures in adults and children who are at least 6 years old, and myoclonic seizures in adults and children who are at least 12 years old.

Important information

Do not stop using Keppra without first talking to your doctor, even if you feel fine. You may have increased seizures if you stop using this medicine suddenly. You may need to use less and less before you stop the medication completely.

Some people have thoughts about suicide when first taking this medicine. Stay alert to changes in your mood or symptoms. Report any new or worsening symptoms to your doctor.

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

Keppra may impair your thinking or reactions. Be careful if you drive or do anything that requires you to be alert. Tell your doctor if you are pregnant or plan to become pregnant while using this medication. Do not start or stop taking levetiracetam during pregnancy without your doctor's advice. Having a seizure during pregnancy could harm both the mother and the baby. Seizure control is very important during pregnancy and the benefits of preventing seizures may outweigh any risks posed by using this medicine.

Before taking this medicine

You should not use Keppra if you are allergic to levetiracetam.

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

- kidney disease (or if you are on dialysis);
- depression or other mood problems;
- a history of mental illness or psychosis; or
- a history of suicidal thoughts or actions.

You may have thoughts about suicide while taking Keppra. Tell your doctor if you have symptoms of depression or suicidal thoughts during the first several weeks of treatment, or whenever your dose is changed. Your family or other caregivers should also be alert to changes in your mood or symptoms.

Do not start or stop taking Keppra 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 while taking levetiracetam for seizures.**

Seizure control is very important during pregnancy. The benefit of preventing seizures may outweigh any risks posed by taking this medicine. There may be other seizure medications that can be more safely used during pregnancy. **Follow your**

doctor's instructions about taking this medicine while you are pregnant.

Levetiracetam can pass into breast milk and may harm a nursing baby. You should not breast-feed while you are using Keppra.

Do not give this medicine to a child without the advice of a doctor. Your child's dose needs are based on age and weight. The child should remain under the care of a doctor while using Keppra.

How should I take Keppra?

Take Keppra exactly as prescribed by your doctor. Follow all directions on your prescription label. Your doctor may occasionally change your dose. Do not take this medicine in larger or smaller amounts or for longer than recommended.

Keppra is usually taken once every 12 to 24 hours. Take the medicine at the same time each day. You may take this medicine with or without food.

If a child is using this medicine, tell your doctor if the child has any changes in weight. Levetiracetam doses are based on weight in children, and any changes may affect your child's dose.

Measure liquid medicine with the dosing syringe provided, or with a special dose-measuring spoon or medicine cup. If you do not have a dose-measuring device, ask your pharmacist for one.

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

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

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

Seizures are often treated with a combination of drugs. Use all medications as directed by your doctor. Read the medication guide or patient instructions provided with each medication. Do not change your doses or medication schedule without your doctor's advice.

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

While using levetiracetam, your kidney function may need to be tested often.

Store at room temperature away from moisture, heat, and light.

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 extreme drowsiness, agitation, aggression, shallow breathing, weakness, or fainting.

What should I avoid while taking Keppra?

Avoid drinking alcohol. It can increase some of the side effects of Keppra and may also increase the risk of seizures.

Levetiracetam may impair your thinking or reactions. Avoid driving or operating machinery until you know how this medicine will affect you. Dizziness or severe drowsiness can cause falls or other accidents.

Keppra side effects

Get emergency medical help if you have **signs of an allergic reaction to Keppra**: hives; difficult breathing; swelling of your face, lips, tongue, or throat.

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

Call your doctor at once if you have:

- unusual changes in mood or behavior (unusual risk-taking behavior, being irritable or talkative);
- confusion, hallucinations, loss of balance or coordination;
- extreme drowsiness, feeling very weak or tired;
- bruising, severe tingling, numbness, pain, muscle weakness;
- problems with walking or movement;
- the first sign of any skin rash, no matter how mild;
- severe skin reaction--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; or
- signs of infection--fever, swollen gums, painful mouth sores, pain when swallowing, skin sores, cold or flu symptoms, cough, trouble breathing.

Common Keppra side effects may include:

- dizziness, drowsiness;
- feeling tired;
- weakness;
- feeling aggressive or irritable;
- loss of appetite;
- stuffy nose; or
- infection.

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 Keppra?

Other drugs may interact with levetiracetam, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal products. Tell each of your health care providers about all medicines you use now and any medicine you start or stop using.

Where can I get more information?

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