



NATIONWIDE CHILDREN'S
When your child needs a hospital, everything matters.™

Helping Hand™

Health Education for Patients and Families

Levetiracetam (Keppra®)

Levetiracetam (LEV-uh-tir-AS-uh-tam) is the generic name for Keppra® (KEP-ra). It most frequently is used to control seizures. It is important to take the medicine **every day**.

How to give this medicine

- Only use a pediatric measuring device (available at the pharmacy) to measure the exact dose.
- Extended-release tablets allow the dose of medicine to be spread out through the day. Do not crush, break or let your child chew them. This can cause the medicine not to work and may cause side effects.
- Regular tablets (immediate release) can be crushed and given with small amounts of food.
- This medicine can be given with or without food.
- Do not change doses or stop the medicine without talking to your child's doctor.

If you forget to give a dose

- If you forget to give a dose of medicine, give it as soon as you remember. Do not give it closer than 4 hours before the next dose.
- Missing one or more doses of medicine may increase the risk of a seizure.
- These instructions may be different if your child is taking levetiracetam more or less than twice daily.

If a dose is vomited

If your child throws up within 15 minutes of taking the dose or you are able to see the whole tablet, then repeat the dose right away. If it has been more than 15 minutes or you do not see the whole tablet, then do not repeat the dose. If the vomiting continues, call your child's doctor.

Possible side effects

- behavioral problems
- changes in mood (depression, mood swings, anxiety)
- sleepiness
- problems with coordination
- dizziness
- cough/runny nose
- nausea
- headache

Medicine storage

- Store all medicine out of the reach of children.
- Always keep medicine in the original bottle from the pharmacy.
- Store at room temperature.
- Keep the bottle tightly closed and store it in a dark, dry place. Do not keep in the bathroom or above the kitchen sink.
- Keep this medicine away from moisture, heat, and direct sunlight.
- Do not use this medicine after the expiration date printed on the container.

Food & medicine interactions

- Acetaminophen, ibuprofen, vitamins and antacids are generally safe to give with levetiracetam. Check with your child's doctor or pharmacist about giving other over-the-counter medications.

Special note for female patients

- Tell your child's doctor if your child thinks they might be pregnant or is thinking of getting pregnant while taking this medicine. You should tell the doctor before beginning this medicine or while taking this medicine.
- There are pregnancy registries to help gain information about babies born to mothers who took levetiracetam when pregnant. Ask your doctor, nurse or pharmacist for more information.

- Tell your child's doctor if they are breast-feeding their baby before starting this medicine or while taking this medicine. This medicine may pass into breast milk and cause side effects in the baby.

Warnings

- If your child is allergic to levetiracetam (Keppra®) they should not take this medicine.
- This medicine is started in low doses and slowly increased to prevent side effects. Never stop this medicine without talking to your child's doctor.

What to do about side effects

- Anti-seizure medicines may increase the risk of suicidal behavior and thoughts. If you notice these thoughts or any unusual or changes in behavior, call your child's doctor right away, or consider emergency help if appropriate.
- Your child can become drowsy or sleepy. If this occurs, do not let them ride a bike or operate power equipment (such as a lawnmower or car). Do not take part in any activities where they must stay alert and awake.
- If a skin rash occurs, stop giving the medicine and call your child's doctor.
- Read the Medication Guide from the pharmacy about behavior side effects.
- Some side effects are short-lived. They can go away in the first week or so after starting a medicine or increasing the dose. For side effects that continue or are very bothersome, call your child's doctor.

When to call for emergency help

Call for emergency help if your child has any of these signs of an **allergic reaction**: trouble breathing; swelling of the tongue; swelling of hands, feet or ankles.

Tips

- Ask your pharmacist for 2 labeled bottles if your daycare provider will be giving this medicine.
- Get this prescription refilled at least 3 days before the last dose is given. This is very important.

Other advice about the medicine

- Tell your child's doctor and pharmacist if your child has a strange or allergic reaction to any medicine.

- If you carry medicine in your purse, keep it in its childproof bottle and keep your purse out of the reach of children.
- Bring all your child's medicines with you in the original bottles whenever your child sees a doctor, goes to an emergency room or is admitted to the hospital. This helps doctors who may not know your child.
- Learn the name, spelling and dose of this medicine. Also, teach your child if they are old enough. You will need to know this information when you call the doctor or pharmacist.
- If your child or someone else takes too much of this medicine, first call the Central Ohio Poison Center at 1-800-222-1222 (ITY 614-228-2272). They will tell you what to do.
- The doctor has prescribed this medicine for your child only. Do not give it to anyone else.
- Tell your child's teacher, school nurse, coach, babysitter and others your child is taking this medicine and what side effects to watch for.
- Your child's school will need a note from you and from the doctor if the medicine is to be given at school by the school nurse.
- Your child's medicine comes with patient information. Make sure the pharmacist gives it to you and that you read it.