
Department of Neurosciences

Primidone drug information

Drug brand names

- Primidone
- Mysoline

Uses

Primidone is one of the oldest drugs used for the treatment of epilepsy (except absence seizures). It helps reduce seizure frequency and severity and in a lot of cases stops seizures altogether. It is available in 250mg tablets only. It is also used to treat essential tremor.

Side effects

The most important side effects are:

- Changes in behaviour, particularly in children
- Changes in thinking and memory

Some people may experience:

- Sleepiness
- Intense dizziness
- Slowness of body movements, especially when starting treatment, or if the dose is too high
- Nausea
- Visual disturbances

When Primidone is used in the long term, the following are other side effects that may develop:

- Coarsening of facial features
- Disturbance in eye movement
- Unsteady walking
- Decreased sex drive
- Primidone can cause Vitamin D deficiency leading to osteomalacia and rickets

Other medically serious side effects are rare and may affect the skin, blood and liver. Blood tests will be performed where appropriate.

Contraception

Primidone reduces the amount of the oral contraceptive pill in your body so that a higher dose pill is required. Even then, contraception may be slightly less effective, especially if there is breakthrough bleeding between periods. You should consider also using a barrier method such as condoms until the problem gets rectified. Primidone does not affect the three month contraceptive injection and other methods such as the Mirena Coil.

Pregnancy

Primidone may have similar effects on a baby to drinking too much alcohol during pregnancy. For example, the baby may have a slow growth rate in the womb and after birth, mental under development and heart defects have been reported. Other problems associated with children born of mothers taking Primidone include facial abnormalities such as hare lip, cleft palate. Ask to see your specialist to discuss the best treatment before you conceive. Once you are pregnant, it is too late. We recommend you take folic acid 5mg daily from at least eight weeks prior to conception until at least 13 weeks of pregnancy.

Drug Interactions

Primidone affects the function of various drugs including other antiepileptic drugs. The extent of this effect varies from person to person depending on genetic factors. For any other medication you are prescribed or buy over the counter, always check with your doctor or pharmacist if there are any interactions with these and Primidone.

Other useful information

- Try to take the medicine at the same time every day.
- Keep a record of your seizures when you start any new medication. This will help determine future drug dosages.
- Do not stop taking Primidone suddenly as this can cause withdrawal seizures. Always withdraw it slowly under supervision.
- If you miss a dose, take it as soon as you remember but do not take two doses at the same time or within six hours of each other.

Contact details

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the epilepsy nurse specialist on 01223 217992.

The information on this leaflet is not exhaustive. Please refer to the patient information leaflet prepared by the manufacturer of your drug which can be found in the medicine packaging.



Addenbrooke's is smoke-free. You cannot smoke on site. For advice on quitting, contact your GP or the NHS smoking helpline free, 0800 169 0 169

Please ask if you require this information in other languages, large print or audio format: 01223 216032 or patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk

Informacje te można otrzymać w innych językach, w wersji dużym drukiem lub audio. Zamówienia prosimy składać pod numerem: 01223 216032 lub wysyłając e-mail: patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk

Polish

Se precisar desta informação num outro idioma, em impressão de letras grandes ou formato áudio por favor telefone para o 01223 216032 ou envie uma mensagem para: patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk

Portuguese

Если вам требуется эта информация на другом языке, крупным шрифтом или в аудиоформате, пожалуйста, обращайтесь по телефону 01223 216032 или на вебсайт patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk

Russian

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Cantonese

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Turkish

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Bengali

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