

# medication for epilepsy: children aged 12 and under

Please turn over for adults aged 13 and over

Drug (generic name)	Available as the following (listed alphabetically)	Average total daily doses (mg = milligram)	Doses per day	Types of seizures or epilepsy that the drug is used for	Most common possible side effects include the following. Report severe reactions, such as a skin rash, to your doctor.
<b>Carbamazepine</b>	<b>Carbamazepine:</b> tablets 100mg, 200mg, 400mg. <b>Carbagen SR (modified release):</b> 200mg, 400mg. <b>Tegretol:</b> tablets 100mg, 200mg, 400mg, chewtabs 100mg, 200mg, liquid (sugar-free) 100mg/5ml, suppositories 125mg, 250mg. <b>Tegretol Prolonged Release:</b> tablets 200mg, 400mg.	1 month – 12 years: 5mg/kg 2 – 3 times daily, up to 20mg/kg daily has been used. 12 years and over: 200 – 400mg 2 – 3 times daily, up to 1800mg.	1 – 3	Effective for tonic clonic seizures, and focal seizures with or without secondarily generalised tonic clonic seizures. May worsen myoclonic and absence seizures.	Skin rash if allergic to carbamazepine. Blurred vision, double vision, dizziness and unsteadiness to start with or if dose is too high. Nausea and vomiting, drowsiness, headache, confusion and agitation.
<b>Clobazam</b>	<b>Clobazam:</b> tablets 10mg. <b>Frisium:</b> tablets 10mg. <b>Taplob:</b> oral liquid suspension 5mg/5ml, 10mg/5ml.	1 month – 6 years: 250micrograms/kg twice daily, up to 500 micrograms/kg twice daily. From 6 years: 0.3mg/kg – 1mg/kg daily, up to 60mg daily.	2	Add-on therapy for seizures. May also be used for catamenial (menstrual-related) and cluster seizures.	Light-headedness, confusion, ataxia (shaky movements) and irritability. Drowsiness can occur.
<b>Clonazepam</b>	<b>Clonazepam:</b> 0.5mg, 2mg. liquid 0.5mg/5ml, 2mg/5ml. <b>Rivotril:</b> tablets 0.5mg, 2mg.	1 month – 1 year: 0.5 – 1mg at night. 1 – 5 years: 1 – 3mg at night. 5 – 12 years: 3 – 6mg at night. From 12 years: 4 – 8mg at night.	1 – 3	For all seizure types.	Drowsiness and sedation are common but may wear off. Tolerance can develop. Dizziness, fatigue (tiredness), poor concentration and restlessness. Excess secretions can be a problem (such as increased drooling).
<b>Ethosuximide</b>	<b>Emeside:</b> syrup 250mg/5ml. <b>Ethosuximide:</b> capsules 250mg. <b>Zarontin:</b> syrup 250mg/5ml.	1 month – 6 years: 10 – 20mg/kg up to twice daily up to 500mg twice daily. Over 6 years: 500 – 750mg twice daily up to 1g twice daily.	2 (rarely 3)	Effective for typical absence, atypical absence and myoclonic seizures.	Headache, drowsiness, nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea, abdominal pain and anorexia.
<b>Gabapentin</b>	<b>Gabapentin:</b> capsules 100mg, 300mg, 400mg, tablets 600mg, 800mg. <b>Neurontin:</b> capsules 100mg, 300mg, 400mg, tablets 600mg, 800mg.	2 – 6 years: 30 – 70mg/kg daily divided into 3 doses. 6 – 12 years: 25 – 35mg/kg daily divided into 3 doses up to 70mg/kg. 12 and over: 900mg – 3600mg daily divided into 3 doses up to 1600mg in each dose.	3	Add-on therapy for focal seizures with or without secondary generalisation. Monotherapy for focal seizures with or without secondary generalisation (from 12 years).	Drowsiness, dizziness, unsteadiness, headache, nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea, constipation, abdominal pain and weight gain.
<b>Lamotrigine</b>	<b>Lamictal:</b> tablets 25mg, 50mg, 100mg, 200mg, dispersible (chewable) tablets 2mg, 5mg, 25mg, 100mg. <b>Lamotrigine:</b> tablets 25mg, 50mg, 100mg, 200mg, dispersible (chewable) tablets 5mg, 25mg, 100mg.	From 2 years. With sodium valproate: 1 – 5mg/kg daily divided into 1 – 2 doses, up to 200mg. With enzyme-inducing AEDs and without sodium valproate: 5 – 15mg/kg daily divided into 1 – 2 doses, up to 400mg. Without enzyme-inducing AEDs and without sodium valproate: 1 – 10mg/kg daily divided into 1 – 2 doses, up to 200mg. Used alone: 1 – 10mg/kg daily divided into 1 – 2 doses, up to 15mg/kg.	1 – 2	Add-on therapy for focal seizures, and primary and secondarily generalised tonic clonic seizures. Also used for seizures associated with Lennox-Gastaut syndrome. Monotherapy for typical absence seizures.	Serious skin rash and hypersensitivity if allergic to lamotrigine. Risk minimised with slow introduction. Nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea, headache, fatigue (tiredness), dizziness and sleep disturbance. Tremor may occur when taken with sodium valproate and may reduce as dose is changed.
<b>Levetiracetam</b>	<b>Desitrend:</b> granules 250mg, 500mg, 1000mg. <b>Kepra:</b> tablets 250mg, 500mg, 750mg, 1000mg, oral solution 100mg/ml. <b>Levetiracetam:</b> tablets 250mg, 500mg, 750mg, 1000mg, oral solution 100mg/ml.	1 – 6 months: up to 21mg/kg twice daily. 6 months and over: up to 30mg/kg twice daily (if body weight under 50kg). From 12 years: up to 1500mg twice daily (if body weight over 50kg).	2	Add-on therapy for focal, myoclonic and tonic clonic seizures.	Nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea, abdominal pain, anorexia, weight changes, dizziness, drowsiness and behaviour change.
<b>Oxcarbazepine</b>	<b>Oxcarbazepine:</b> tablets 150mg, 300mg, 600mg. <b>Trileptal:</b> tablets 150mg, 300mg, 600mg, oral suspension (sugar-free) 60mg/ml.	From 6 years: 15mg/kg twice daily. Max 23mg/kg twice daily.	2	Monotherapy and add-on therapy for focal seizures with or without secondarily generalised tonic clonic seizures.	Skin rash if allergic to oxcarbazepine. Nausea, vomiting, constipation, diarrhoea, dizziness, headache, double vision and drowsiness.
<b>Phenobarbital</b>	<b>Phenobarbital:</b> tablets 15mg, 30mg, 60mg, elixir 15mg/5ml.	1 month – 12 years: 2.5 – 4mg/kg once or twice daily. From 12 years: 60 – 180mg once daily.	1 – 2	Effective for all seizure types except typical absences.	Drowsiness may happen to start with, sedation and slowed thought may be long-lasting. Lethargy, depression, ataxia (shaky movements), aggression and behavioural problems.
<b>Phenytoin</b>	<b>Epanutin:</b> chewable infatabs 50mg, oral suspension 30mg/5ml. <b>Phenytoin:</b> tablets 100mg. <b>Phenytoin Sodium Flynn:</b> capsules 25mg, 50mg, 100mg, 300mg.	1 month – 12 years: 7.5mg/kg twice daily or 300mg daily. From 12 years: 150 – 200mg twice daily to max 300mg twice daily.	2	Effective for all seizure types except absence seizures. Blood testing is essential as the relationship between dose and blood level is complex.	Skin rash if allergic to phenytoin. Nausea, vomiting, constipation, insomnia (not able to sleep), tremor, pins and needles, dizziness and headache. Can cause coarse facial features, acne, hirsutism (excess hair) and overgrowth of gums if used over a long time.
<b>Sodium valproate</b>	<b>Convulex</b> (valproic acid enteric coated): capsules 150mg, 300mg, 500mg. <b>Epilim:</b> tablets 200mg, 500mg, crushable tablets 100mg, liquid (sugar free) 200mg/5ml, syrup 200mg/5ml. <b>Epilim Chrono:</b> tablets 200mg, 300mg, 500mg. <b>Epilim Chronosphere:</b> (granules) 50mg, 100mg, 250mg, 500mg, 750mg, 1000mg. <b>Episenta (prolonged release):</b> capsules 150mg, 300mg, granules 500mg, 1000mg. <b>Epival:</b> modified release tablets 300mg, 500mg. <b>Sodium valproate:</b> crushable tablets 100mg, 200mg, 500mg, oral solution 200mg/5ml.	1 month – 12 years: 25 – 30mg/kg daily divided into 2 doses. Up to 60mg/kg daily divided into 2 doses for infantile spasms.	2	Effective for all forms of seizures including infantile spasms.	Hair loss – not usually severe and is usually reversible if the dose is reduced. Nausea, stomach upset, diarrhoea, and weight gain (due to increased appetite). Hyperactivity and behaviour problems. Has been associated with polycystic ovaries and menstrual problems.
<b>Topiramate</b>	<b>Topamax:</b> tablets 25mg, 50mg, 100mg, 200mg, sprinkle capsules 15mg, 25mg, 50mg. <b>Topiramate:</b> tablets 25mg, 50mg, 100mg, 200mg, capsules 15mg, 25mg, 50mg.	Monotherapy (from 6 years): 50mg twice daily up to 250mg twice daily. Add-on therapy (from 2 years): 2.5 – 4.5mg/kg twice daily up to 200mg twice daily.	2	Monotherapy for generalised tonic clonic seizures or focal seizures with or without secondary generalisation. Add-on therapy for generalised tonic clonic seizures or focal seizures with or without secondary generalisation and for Lennox-Gastaut syndrome.	Headache, drowsiness, dizziness, weight loss and pins and needles. Slowed thought and speech may occur. Some cases of eye problems have been reported within one month of starting treatment.
<b>Zonisamide</b>	<b>Zonegran:</b> capsules 25mg, 50mg, 100mg.	From 6 years. Body weight 20 – 55kg: 6 – 8mg/kg daily. Body weight over 55kg: 300 – 500mg daily.	1	Add-on therapy for partial seizures with or without secondary generalisation.	<b>Skin rash.</b> Nausea, diarrhoea, abdominal pain, constipation, indigestion, anorexia, weight loss, drowsiness, dizziness, confusion, agitation, irritability, depression, psychosis, and unsteadiness.

## Drugs used for rarer specific types of epilepsy, or infrequently used in children

Drug (generic name)	Available as the following (listed alphabetically)	Average total daily doses (mg = milligram)	Doses per day	Types of seizures or epilepsy that the drug is used for	Most common possible side effects include the following. Report severe reactions, such as a skin rash, to your doctor.
<b>Nitrazepam</b>	<b>Nitrazepam:</b> tablets 5mg, oral suspension 2.5mg/5ml.	1 month – 2 years: 0.25mg/kg twice daily, up to 0.5mg/kg twice daily.	2 – 3	Effective for infantile spasms only.	Drowsiness, confusion and ataxia (shaky movements).
<b>Primidone</b>	<b>Primidone:</b> tablets 50mg, 250mg.	Up to 2 years: 125 – 250mg twice daily. 2 – 5 years: 250 – 375mg twice daily. 5 – 9 years: 375 – 500mg twice daily. 9 years and over: up to 750mg twice daily.	2	Effective for all seizure types except absence seizures. <i>Not often used in children.</i>	Drowsiness, lethargy, depression, psychosis, ataxia (shaky movements) and behavioural problems.
<b>Rufinamide</b>	<b>Inovelon:</b> tablets 100mg, 200mg, 400mg, oral suspension 40mg/ml.	From 4 years: (body weight under 30kg): 500mg twice daily (or 300mg twice daily if taking with sodium valproate). For body weight 30kg and over different doses will apply.	2	Add-on therapy for Lennox-Gastaut syndrome.	Nausea, vomiting, constipation, diarrhoea, abdominal pain, rhinitis (runny nose), weight loss and dizziness.
<b>Stiripentol</b>	<b>Diacomit:</b> capsules 250mg, 500mg, powder sachets 250mg, 500mg.	From 3 years: 50mg/kg/day divided into 2 – 3 doses.	2 – 3	Add-on therapy for tonic clonic seizures for children with severe myoclonic epilepsy in infancy (SMEI or Dravet syndrome) where other treatment has not worked.	Nausea, vomiting, aggression, anorexia, ataxia (shaky movements), drowsiness and excitability.

## Drugs used with caution only when other treatment has not been effective

Drug (generic name)	Available as the following (listed alphabetically)	Average total daily doses (mg = milligram)	Doses per day	Types of seizures or epilepsy that the drug is used for	Most common possible side effects include the following. Report severe reactions, such as a skin rash, to your doctor.
<b>Vigabatrin</b>	<b>Sabril:</b> tablets 500mg, powder 500mg/sachet.	Add-on therapy (from 1 month): 30 – 40mg/kg twice daily, (1 month – 2 years): up to 75mg/kg twice daily or (2 – 12 years): 1.5g twice daily. Monotherapy (1 month – 2 years): 40 – 50mg/kg twice daily, up to 75mg/kg twice daily.	2	Add-on therapy for focal seizures with or without secondary generalisation where other treatment has not worked. Monotherapy for infantile spasms. Particularly useful in Tuberous Sclerosis. May worsen absence and myoclonic seizures.	Drowsiness, fatigue, nausea, behaviour and mood changes. Visual field defects have been reported in some adults: visual fields should be checked every six months.

- This chart is a guide only, and lists the **usual** daily doses of anti-epileptic drugs (AEDs). The dose a child takes may be different to those listed above.
- Children starting AED treatment at the age of 12 may start on adult doses (see over). Some AEDs are **only** used for children aged 12 and over (including eslicarbazepine acetate, lacosamide, perampanel, pregabalin, retigabine and tiagabine) and these are listed over the page.
- Treatment of neonatal seizures (from birth to 28 days of age) is not included on this chart.
- Most doses are listed as 'mg/kg': this means milligrams of AED per kg of the child's weight. Please note that doses for clobazam are in micrograms.
- Some AED doses are listed as 'twice daily' (for example '5mg/kg twice daily'). This means that the dose listed is taken each time (and so the total daily dose will be double that listed).
- Some AED doses are listed as 'divided into 2 (or 3) doses' (for example '25 – 30mg/kg daily divided into 2 doses'). This means that the total amount listed is divided into two to give the dose taken each time.
- 'Effective' means the seizures it works for. 'Monotherapy' means the AED is taken on its own. 'Add-on therapy' means the AED is taken alongside other AEDs. 'Tolerance' means that a drug becomes less effective the longer you take it.



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Information for this chart comes from sources including the British National Formulary (BNF) for children and the electronic Medicines Compendium (eMC). The side effects listed here are some of the most common possible side effects and may be worded differently in the patient information leaflet for the AED. Doctors may refer to the BNF for starting doses and how to increase doses. For more details, and a complete list of side effects, visit [www.medicines.org.uk/guides/epilepsy](http://www.medicines.org.uk/guides/epilepsy)

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**Epilepsy Helpline 01494 601 400 Monday to Friday 9am to 4pm, Wednesday 9am to 8pm.**  
**Confidential (national call rate).**

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# medication for epilepsy: adults aged 13 and over

Please turn over for children aged 12 and under

First line drugs (generic name)	Available as the following (listed alphabetically)	Average total daily doses (mg = milligram)	Doses per day	Treatment	Most common possible side effects include the following. Report severe reactions, such as a skin rash, to your doctor.
<b>Carbamazepine</b>	<b>Carbamazepine:</b> tablets 100mg, 200mg, 400mg. <b>Carbagen SR (modified release):</b> 200mg, 400mg. <b>Tegretol:</b> tablets 100mg, 200mg, 400mg, chewtabs 100mg, 200mg, liquid (sugar free) 100mg/5ml, suppositories 125mg, 250mg. <b>Tegretol Prolonged Release:</b> tablets 200mg, 400mg.	800mg – 1200mg divided into up to 4 doses a day, up to 2000mg. (Liquid is given as 3 doses a day). Tegretol Prolonged Release is usually taken twice a day.	2 – 4	Effective for focal seizures and primary tonic clonic and secondarily generalised tonic clonic seizures. May worsen absence and myoclonic seizures.	<b>Skin rash.</b> Dry mouth, nausea, vomiting, fluid retention, unsteadiness, dizziness, drowsiness, fatigue, headache, low sodium in the blood, blood disorders, dermatitis, and hives.
<b>Ethosuximide</b>	<b>Emeside:</b> syrup 250mg/5ml. <b>Ethosuximide:</b> capsules 250mg. <b>Zarontin:</b> syrup 250mg/5ml.	1000mg – 1500mg daily divided into 2 doses, up to 2000mg.	2 – 3	Effective for typical and atypical absences.	Nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea, abdominal pain, anorexia, and weight loss.
<b>Lamotrigine</b>	<b>Lamictal:</b> tablets 25mg, 50mg, 100mg, 200mg, dispersible tablets 2mg, 5mg, 25mg, 100mg. <b>Lamotrigine:</b> tablets 25mg, 50mg, 100mg, 200mg, dispersible tablets 5mg, 25mg, 100mg.	Used alone: 100 – 200mg daily divided into 1 – 2 doses, up to 500mg. With sodium valproate: 100 – 200mg daily divided into 1 – 2 doses. With enzyme-inducing AEDs and without sodium valproate: 200 – 400mg daily divided into 1 – 2 doses, up to 700mg. Without enzyme-inducing AEDs and without sodium valproate: 100 – 200mg daily divided into 1 – 2 doses.	1 – 2	Monotherapy and add-on therapy for focal and generalised seizures. Also used for seizures associated with Lennox-Gastaut syndrome.	<b>Serious skin rash and hypersensitivity.</b> Risk minimised with slow introduction. Nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea, dry mouth, aggression, agitation, headache, drowsiness, dizziness, tremor, difficulty sleeping, unsteadiness, back pain, joint pain, eye movements, double vision, and blurred vision.
<b>Levetiracetam</b>	<b>Desitrend:</b> granules 250mg, 500mg, 1000mg. <b>Keppra:</b> tablets 250mg, 500mg, 750mg, 1000mg, oral solution 100mg/ml. <b>Levetiracetam:</b> tablets 250mg, 500mg, 750mg, 1000mg, oral solution 100mg/ml.	Up to 1500mg twice daily.	2	Monotherapy and add-on therapy for focal seizures with or without secondary generalisation. Add-on therapy for myoclonic seizures in Juvenile Myoclonic Epilepsy.	Anorexia, weight changes, abdominal pain, nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea, drowsiness, unsteadiness, dizziness, headache, tremor, amnesia, aggression, agitation, depression, anxiety, and double or blurred vision.
<b>Oxcarbazepine</b>	<b>Oxcarbazepine:</b> tablets 150mg, 300mg, 600mg. <b>Trileptal:</b> tablets 150mg, 300mg, 600mg, oral suspension 60mg/ml.	Up to 18 years: 30mg/kg daily divided into 2 or 3 doses, up to 46mg/kg. From 18 years: 600mg – 2400mg daily divided into 2 or 3 doses.	2 – 3	<b>Effective</b> for focal seizures, tonic clonic seizures and secondarily generalised tonic clonic seizures.	<b>Skin rash.</b> Nausea, vomiting, constipation, diarrhoea, abdominal pain, dizziness, headache, drowsiness, agitation, amnesia, hair loss, weakness, unsteadiness, confusion, depression, and tremor.
<b>Sodium valproate</b>	<b>Convulex (valproic acid enteric coated):</b> capsules 150mg, 300mg, 500mg. <b>Epilim:</b> tablets 200mg, 500mg, crushable tablets 100mg, liquid (sugar free) 200mg/5ml, syrup 200mg/5ml. <b>Epilim Chrono:</b> tablets 200mg, 300mg, 500mg. <b>Epilim Chronosphere:</b> (granules) 50mg, 100mg, 250mg, 500mg, 750mg, 1000mg. <b>Episenta (prolonged release):</b> capsules 150mg, 300mg, granules 500mg, 1000mg. <b>Epival:</b> modified release tablets 300mg, 500mg. <b>Sodium valproate:</b> crushable tablets 100mg, 200mg, 500mg, oral solution 200mg/5ml.	1000mg – 2000mg daily divided into 1 or 2 doses, up to 2500mg daily.	1 – 2	Effective for all types of seizures.	Hair loss – not usually severe and is usually reversible if the dose is reduced. Nausea, stomach upset, diarrhoea, and weight gain (due to increased appetite), increased levels of ammonia in the blood, and reduced platelets in the blood. Has been associated with polycystic ovaries and menstrual problems. Sodium valproate carries a higher risk than other AEDs of causing developmental problems in unborn babies if taken during pregnancy. Having preconception counselling is recommended.
Second line drugs (generic name)	Available as (brand name)	Average total dose in a day for adults	Doses per day	Treatment	Most common possible side effects include the following. Report severe reactions, such as a skin rash, to your doctor.
<b>Acetazolamide</b>	<b>Acetazolamide:</b> tablets 250mg. <b>Diamox SR:</b> capsules (prolonged-release) 250mg.	250mg – 1000mg daily divided into 2 or 3 doses.	2 – 3	Effective for focal, tonic clonic and absence seizures. Also used for menstrual-related seizures, certain episodic disorders and to enhance other AEDs.	Nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea, taste disturbance, loss of appetite, pins and needles, flushing, headache, dizziness, fatigue, irritability, excitement, unsteadiness, depression, thirst, increased urination, and reduced libido. Tolerance may develop.
<b>Clobazam</b>	<b>Clobazam:</b> tablets 10mg. <b>Frisium:</b> tablets 10mg. <b>Tapclob:</b> oral liquid suspension 5mg/5ml, 10mg/5ml.	20mg – 30mg daily divided into 1 or 2 doses, up to 60mg.	1 – 2	Add-on therapy for focal and tonic clonic seizures.	Drowsiness, light-headedness, confusion, unsteadiness, amnesia, dependence, aggression, and muscle weakness. This drug is less sedating than clonazepam or diazepam. Tolerance may develop.
<b>Clonazepam</b>	<b>Clonazepam:</b> 0.5mg, 2mg, liquid 0.5mg/5ml, 2mg/5ml. <b>Rivotril:</b> tablets 0.5mg, 2mg.	4mg – 8mg usually at night. Can be divided into smaller doses if necessary.	1 – 2	Effective for focal, tonic clonic, myoclonic and absence seizures.	Drowsiness, fatigue, dizziness, low muscle tone, coordination problems, low concentration, restlessness, confusion, amnesia, and dependence. Tolerance tends to develop.
<b>Eslicarbazepine acetate</b>	<b>Zebinix:</b> tablets 800mg.	From 18 years: 800mg once a day, up to 1200mg.	1	Effective as an add-on therapy for focal seizures, tonic clonic and secondarily generalised tonic clonic seizures.	<b>Skin rash.</b> Nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea, dizziness, drowsiness, headache, impaired coordination, tremor, visual problems, and fatigue.
<b>Gabapentin</b>	<b>Gabapentin:</b> capsules 100mg, 300mg, 400mg, tablets 600mg, 800mg. <b>Neurontin:</b> capsules 100mg, 300mg, 400mg, tablets 600mg, 800mg.	900mg – 3600mg daily divided into 3 doses, up to 4800mg daily.	3	Monotherapy and add-on therapy for focal seizures with or without secondary generalisation (where other treatment has not worked). May make myoclonic and absence seizures worse.	<b>Rash.</b> Diarrhoea, nausea, vomiting, dry mouth, appetite change, weight gain, high blood pressure, fluid retention, confusion, depression, sleep disturbance, headache, dizziness, anxiety, tremor, unsteadiness, flu-like symptoms, incontinence, impotence, and double vision.
<b>Lacosamide</b>	<b>Vimpat:</b> tablets 50mg, 100mg, 150mg, 200mg, syrup 10mg/ml.	From 16 years: 200mg twice a day.	2	Add-on therapy for focal seizures with or without secondary generalisation.	Nausea, vomiting, constipation, wind, dizziness, headache, impaired coordination, drowsiness, tremor, depression, fatigue, abnormal walking, blurred vision, abnormal eye movements, and itching.
<b>Perampanel</b>	<b>Fycompa:</b> tablets 2mg, 4mg, 6mg, 8mg, 10mg, 12mg.	4 – 8mg once a day, up to 12mg.	1	Add-on therapy for focal seizures with or without secondary generalisation.	Dizziness, sleepiness, loss of or increased appetite, aggression, anger, anxiety, confusion, unsteadiness, speech difficulties, balance disorder, irritability, blurred or double vision, vertigo, nausea, back pain, walking difficulty, fatigue, weight gain, and risk of falling.
<b>Phenobarbital</b>	<b>Phenobarbital:</b> tablets 15mg, 30mg, 60mg, elixir 15mg/5ml.	60mg – 180mg daily at night.	1 – 2	Effective for focal and tonic clonic seizures.	<b>Rash.</b> Hepatitis, low blood pressure, drowsiness, lethargy, depression, unsteadiness, and impaired memory or cognition.
<b>Phenytoin</b>	<b>Epanutin:</b> chewable infatabs 50mg, oral suspension 30mg/5ml. <b>Phenytoin:</b> tablets 100mg. <b>Phenytoin Sodium Flynn:</b> hard capsules 25mg, 50mg, 100mg, 300mg.	200mg – 500mg daily divided into 1 or 2 doses.	1 – 2	Effective for focal and tonic clonic seizures. Ineffective against absences. Blood testing is essential to guide the doses.	<b>Skin rash.</b> Nausea, vomiting, constipation, drowsiness, insomnia, nervousness, tremor, pins and needles, dizziness, headache, anorexia, gum problems, acne, excess hair growth, and coarsening of facial features.
<b>Pregabalin</b>	<b>Lyrica:</b> capsules 25mg, 50mg, 75mg, 100mg, 150mg, 200mg, 225mg, 300mg, oral solution 20mg/ml.	From 18 years: 300mg daily divided into 2 – 3 doses, up to 600mg daily.	2	Add-on therapy for focal seizures with or without secondary generalisation.	Dry mouth, constipation, vomiting, wind, fluid retention, dizziness, irritability, low attention, muscle and movement problems, speech disorder, impaired memory, pins and needles, euphoria, confusion, insomnia, blurred or double vision, and sexual dysfunction.
<b>Primidone</b>	<b>Primidone:</b> tablets 50mg, 250mg.	750mg – 1500mg daily divided into 2 doses.	2	Effective for all seizure types except typical absences.	<b>Rash.</b> Hepatitis, low blood pressure, drowsiness, lethargy, depression, unsteadiness, impaired memory or cognition, and nausea.
<b>Tiagabine</b>	<b>Gabitril:</b> tablets 5mg, 10mg, 15mg.	With enzyme-inducing AEDs: 30 – 45mg daily divided into 2 – 3 doses. Without enzyme-inducing AEDs: 15 – 30mg daily divided into 2 – 3 doses.	1 – 3	Add-on therapy for focal seizures with or without secondary generalisation where other treatment has not worked. May make myoclonic seizures worse.	Diarrhoea, dizziness, tiredness, nervousness, tremor, concentration problems, emotional reactions, and speech impairment.
<b>Topiramate</b>	<b>Topamax:</b> tablets 25mg, 50mg, 100mg, 200mg, sprinkle capsules 15mg, 25mg, 50mg. <b>Topiramate:</b> tablets 25mg, 50mg, 100mg, 200mg, capsules 15mg, 25mg, 50mg.	Taken alone: 100mg daily (up to 18 years) or 100 – 200mg daily (over 18 years). Taken with other AEDs: 5 – 9mg/kg daily (up to 18 years) or 200 – 400mg daily (over 18 years). All divided into 2 doses.	2	Used for focal seizures with or without secondary generalisation and tonic clonic seizures, where other treatment has not worked. Topiramate has a licence for monotherapy but is not widely used as a first line drug.	<b>Rash.</b> Nausea, diarrhoea, vomiting, constipation, indigestion, abdominal pain, dry mouth, appetite changes, impaired attention, cognition and coordination, movement problems, tremor, drowsiness, dizziness, anxiety, confusion, mood changes, depression, irritability, and anaemia.
<b>Zonisamide</b>	<b>Zonegran:</b> capsules 25mg, 50mg, 100mg.	From 18 years: 300mg – 500mg daily divided into 1 or 2 doses.	1 – 2	Add-on therapy for focal seizures with or without secondary generalisation.	<b>Skin rash.</b> Nausea, diarrhoea, abdominal pain, constipation, indigestion, anorexia, weight loss, drowsiness, dizziness, confusion, agitation, irritability, depression, psychosis, and unsteadiness.

## Drugs used for rarer specific types of epilepsy

Second line drugs (generic name)	Available as (brand name)	Average total dose in a day for adults	Doses per day	Treatment	Most common possible side effects include the following. Report severe reactions, such as a skin rash, to your doctor.
<b>Rufinamide</b>	<b>Inovelon:</b> tablets 100mg, 200mg, 400mg, oral suspension 40mg/ml.	900mg – 1600mg (depending on body weight and whether also taking sodium valproate) twice daily.	2	Add-on therapy for Lennox-Gastaut syndrome.	<b>Hypersensitivity syndrome (possibly including rash and fever)</b> – if concerned seek immediate medical attention. Nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea, constipation, indigestion, abdominal pain, weight loss, anorexia, runny nose, nosebleeds, dizziness, headache, drowsiness, insomnia, anxiety, tiredness, flu-like symptoms, and blurred or double vision.

## Drugs used with caution only when other treatment has not been effective

Second line drugs (generic name)	Available as (brand name)	Average total dose in a day for adults	Doses per day	Treatment	Most common possible side effects include the following. Report severe reactions, such as a skin rash, to your doctor.
<b>Piracetam</b>	<b>Nootropil:</b> tablets 800mg, 1200mg, oral solution 333.3mg/ml (take with water to reduce the bitter taste).	From 16 years: up to 24g daily divided into 2 or 3 doses.	2 – 3	Used for myoclonic seizures where other treatment has not worked.	<b>Rash.</b> Weight gain, nervousness, and overactive restlessness.
<b>Retigabine</b>	<b>Trobalt:</b> tablets 50mg, 100mg, 200mg, 300mg, 400mg.	From 18 years: 600mg – 1200mg daily divided into 3 doses.	3	Add-on therapy for focal seizures with or without secondary generalisation. <i>Not widely prescribed due to possible side effects.</i>	Dizziness, sleepiness, fatigue, weight gain, confusion, anxiety, tremor, double or blurred vision, nausea, constipation, and problems urinating. Retigabine can cause problems with heart rhythm (consult your doctor).
<b>Vigabatrin</b>	<b>Sabril:</b> tablets 500mg, powder (sugar free) 500mg/sachet.	2000mg – 3000mg daily divided into 1 or 2 doses.	1 – 2	Effective for focal seizures with or without secondarily generalised seizures where other treatment has not worked. Used for West syndrome with Tuberous Sclerosis. May worsen absence and myoclonic seizures. <i>Not widely prescribed due to possible side effects.</i>	Nausea, abdominal pain, fluid retention, drowsiness, fatigue, agitation, dizziness, headache, nervousness, depression, aggression, impaired concentration or memory, tremor, and weight gain. Visual field defects have been reported in some adults: visual fields should be checked every six months. Talk to your GP or neurologist if you are concerned about this.

- This chart is a guide only, and lists the **usual** daily doses of anti-epileptic drugs (AEDs). The dose an adult takes may be different to those listed above.
- Some AED doses are listed as **'twice daily'** (for example '5mg/kg twice daily'). This means that the dose listed is taken each time (and so the total daily dose will be double that listed).
- Some AED doses are listed as **'divided into 2 doses'** (for example '25 - 30mg/kg daily divided into 2 doses'). This means that the total amount listed is divided into two to give the dose taken each time.
- 'Effective' means the seizures it works for. 'Monotherapy' means the AED is taken on its own. 'Add-on therapy' means the AED is taken alongside other AEDs. 'Tolerance' means that a drug becomes less effective the longer you take it.

Information for this chart comes from sources including the British National Formulary (BNF) and the electronic Medicines Compendium (eMC). The side effects listed here are some of the most common possible side effects and may be worded differently in the patient information leaflet for the AED. Doctors may refer to the BNF for starting doses and how to increase doses. For more details, and a complete list of side effects, visit [www.medicines.org.uk/guides/epilepsy](http://www.medicines.org.uk/guides/epilepsy)

Every effort is made to ensure that all information is correct at time of printing but information may change after printing. This information is not a substitute for advice from your doctor. Epilepsy Society is not responsible for any actions taken as a result of using this information.

**Epilepsy Helpline 01494 601 400 Monday to Friday 9am to 4pm, Wednesday 9am to 8pm. Confidential (national call rate).**

[www.epilepsysociety.org.uk](http://www.epilepsysociety.org.uk)

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