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PSYCHIATRY

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PATIENT EDUCATION

Pregabalin

Lyrica / Lyrica CR / Generic formulations

A guide for adults taking pregabalin.
Follow the directions on your prescription and your provider's recommendations.

CONTROLLED MEDICINE / C-V

DO NOT STOP SUDDENLY

Formulations: Immediate-release capsules or solution and extended-release tablets have different schedules and approved uses. Kidney function affects dosing.

What it is used for

Pregabalin treats certain nerve-pain conditions, fibromyalgia, and focal seizures, depending on formulation. Generalized-anxiety treatment is approved in some countries and off-label in the United States.

How it works

It binds to the alpha-2-delta part of calcium channels, changing release of excitatory messengers. It does not act directly like a benzodiazepine at GABA receptors.

What to expect over time

The dose is often increased gradually to balance benefit and side effects. Track the condition being treated and report changes after each adjustment.

Taking your medication

- Take immediate-release doses as prescribed, with or without food.
- Lyrica CR is taken after an evening meal and swallowed whole. Follow its separate missed-dose instructions rather than copying immediate-release directions.
- Do not double doses or switch formulations yourself.
- Consult with your provider before stopping; a gradual reduction is needed.

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Side effects and safety

Possible side effects

- Dizziness, sleepiness, or blurred vision
- Swelling of feet or legs
- Weight gain
- Difficulty concentrating

Keeping track of treatment

Some side effects resolve with time; others may require a change of medication. Discuss persistent or bothersome side effects with your provider.

Report changes in mood, behavior, concentration, or suicidal thoughts. Antiseizure medicines carry a warning about suicidal thoughts and behavior.

Keep follow-up appointments. Your provider may adjust treatment based on symptoms, kidney or liver function, other medicines, and any recommended laboratory tests.

Track swelling, weight, breathing, falls, and dose use. Physical dependence, misuse, and addiction are possible even though it differs from opioids and benzodiazepines.

If you take too much

For a suspected overdose, call Poison Control at **1-800-222-1222** immediately, even if you feel well. Call 911 for a seizure, collapse, trouble breathing, or inability to wake.

Before you start

Discuss kidney or liver disease, previous medication rashes, depression, and the reason for treatment.

Discuss pregnancy, pregnancy plans, and breastfeeding with your provider. Treatment decisions should consider both the medication and the condition being treated.

Discuss heart failure, lung disease, sleep apnea, kidney impairment, and prior angioedema. Pregnancy planning deserves particular review.

Medicines and interactions

Review all your medications with your provider, including over-the-counter medicines and supplements. Have new medications checked before taking them.

Opioids, benzodiazepines, alcohol, and other sedatives can cause dangerous additive breathing suppression.

ACE inhibitors may add angioedema risk; some diabetes medicines can add fluid retention.

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Living with your treatment

When to get help

Emergency symptoms. Call 911 for slow breathing, inability to wake, swelling of the face or throat, or a prolonged or repeated seizure.

Prompt medical advice. Contact your provider promptly for a new rash, severe unsteadiness, unusual confusion, or major changes in mood or behavior.

If you feel unsafe or have thoughts of self-harm, call 911 or go to an emergency department.

Your questions answered

Can I stop if I feel well?
Consult with your provider before stopping. Abrupt withdrawal can cause seizures or a return of the condition being treated.

Does use for seizures mean I have epilepsy?
Not necessarily. Some antiseizure medicines have other approved or off-label uses. Confirm the specific goal of your prescription.

Everyday tips

Use reminders and arrange refills before you run out.

Avoid driving until you know how treatment affects you; seizure-related driving restrictions may also apply.

Storage and safety

Keep medication in its labeled container, away from excess heat and moisture and out of reach of children and pets. Do not share it. Ask a pharmacy about disposal of unused medication.

Sources

Official prescribing information: pregabalin
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Educational handout; does not replace your prescription or provider's recommendations.