

*This leaflet is intended to provide a brief overview of aspects of this treatment protocol. It is not intended as a substitute for the comprehensive 'product information' leaflet found inside all boxes of medication. The 'product information' leaflet should always be read before taking medication.

The use of any medicine is based on considerations of how benefits outweigh potential side effects.

Although an established treatment for migraine and other conditions, Sodium Valproate is not licensed for the treatment of migraine.

Information for adult patients using Sodium Valproate in the prevention of migraine headaches

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Neurology Services

The aim of this leaflet is to give you information about using Sodium Valproate in the prevention of migraine headaches.

Why do I need Sodium Valproate?

Sodium Valproate can be useful in the **preventive** treatment of migraine.

This drug has been used for many years in the management of other conditions such as epilepsy. It is used in headache prevention when other preventative drugs have not helped.

How should I take sodium valproate?

The dose required in migraine prevention is generally lower than that required in epilepsy. When starting Sodium valproate use a small dose of 100mg daily for a week then increase to 100mg twice daily from week 2, then 200mg twice daily from week 3, continuing on this dose if it effectively controls your migraines. Higher doses of 300mg twice daily or 400mg twice daily may be required in some individuals. The smallest effective dose should be used.

For how long should I take the drug?

If you are taking this drug for headaches and not for epilepsy, continue the drug for 6 months, after which time it is reasonable to slowly cut down the dose then stop the drug.

Do not take Sodium Valproate:

- If you are pregnant, trying for a baby or breast-feeding.
- If you suffer from liver problems or from Porphyrria.

Side effects

- Some of the side-effects of Sodium Valproate include nausea, drowsiness, tremor and weight gain.
- Rarely, jaundice, blood disorders or pancreatitis may occur.
- If you develop any unexpected and unexplained skin bruising or develop yellow discoloration of your skin (jaundice), you should seek medical attention as soon as possible.
- If you develop abdominal pain associated with nausea or vomiting seek medical attention as soon as possible as these can be symptoms of pancreatitis.
- For more information, read the product information leaflet alongside your tablets.
- Alcohol consumption may make some of these side effects more pronounced.