

# *Your medication*



IH-V-101  
R..D/ 3/03  
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## **Divalproex Sodium (Depakote)**

## **Valproic Acid (Depakene)**

### **Why do I need this medicine?**

- This medicine helps control seizures. It helps control absence, myoclonic, partial, and convulsive seizures.
- It is also used to help balance mood swings in people who have mood disorders.

### **How do I take this medicine?**

- Your doctor may want you to take this medicine as a pill or liquid.
- Take the medicine just like your doctor told you. **Do not stop** taking divalproex or valproic acid unless the doctor tells you to stop.
- Take this medicine with food or milk. This may keep you from getting an upset stomach. **Do not** chew it or break it in half.
- If you are taking the liquid, make sure you use the correct spoon. Kitchen spoons are not always the same size and you may not get the right amount of divalproex or valproic acid.
- **Do not miss any doses of your medicine.** If you do miss a dose take it as soon as possible. If it is almost time for your next dose, skip the missed dose and go back to your regular schedule. Do not take two doses at the same time.

### **What common side effects may I have?**

Having side effects **does not** mean that you are allergic to the medicine. Side effects will usually get better after a few days. If they do not, you should tell your doctor. The doctor can make some changes in the medicine. **Do not** stop taking the medicine unless the doctor tells you to.

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- You may feel hungry. If you eat more than usual, you may gain weight.
- You may have hand tremors (shaking).

### Call your doctor if:

- you get a rash (red, itchy bumps on your skin)
- your urine (pee) turns dark brown
- your skin turns a yellow color
- you have stomach pain
- you feel unusually tired

### What special things do I need to know?

1. **Alert!** If you are taking blood thinners or have a bleeding problem, tell your doctor. Divalproex or valproic acid may make bleeding worse. **Do not** take other medicines without talking to your doctor.
2. Tell your doctor if you are **allergic to any medicine**.
3. Make sure to **keep your appointments** for doctor visits and blood tests.
4. **Do not** drink alcohol while you are taking this medicine. Beer, wine, or hard liquor may make you more dizzy or sleepy. Drinking alcohol could cause you to have seizures if you are taking divalproex or valproic acid for seizure control.
5. **Do not** share this medicine with anyone.
6. Keep all medicine out of the reach of children. Even a small amount of this medicine may make a child very sick or cause death. Keep all your medicines in a safe place where children cannot get them.
7. This medicine may change the way the birth control pill works, and you may get pregnant. If you do not want to become pregnant, talk to your doctor about other methods of birth control.
8. If you are pregnant, planning to become pregnant, or breast-feeding, tell your doctor **before** you take this medicine. **This medicine may have harmful effects on unborn babies.** If you are not using birth control, be sure and tell your doctor.