

Valproate

(Epilim, Depakote, Convulex, Episenta, Epival, Kentlim, Orlept, Sodium Valproate, Syonell and Valpal)

Patient Guide



EasyRead Version



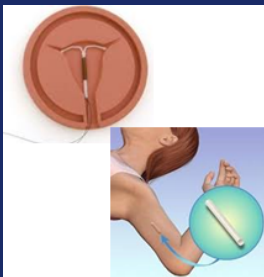
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About this guide



This guide is for girls and women who are old enough to get pregnant and who are taking medicine that has valproate in it.



Valproate is also called Epilim, Depakote, Convulex, Episenta, Epival, Kentlim, Orlept, Sodium Valproate, Syonell or Valpal.

You may see one of these names on your prescription or on the box of your medicine.



Valproate is used to treat conditions such as epilepsy or bipolar disorder.



You will need to take contraception while using valproate

What are the risks of taking valproate when pregnant?



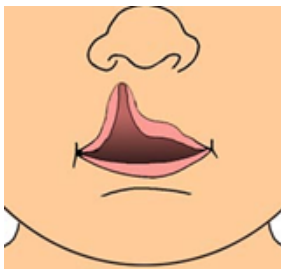
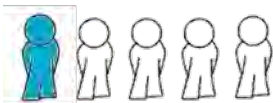
If you take valproate when you are pregnant it can seriously harm your baby.



If you take valproate the risks are higher than if you take other medicines for epilepsy or bipolar disorder.



There is a risk even if you only take a small dose of valproate. The higher the dose, the bigger the risk.



1 in 10 babies have a **birth defect** if a mother takes valproate when she is pregnant. A **birth defect** is where the baby didn't develop properly in the womb. Cleft lip is an example of a birth defect.

What are the risks of taking valproate when pregnant?



If a mother takes valproate when she is pregnant 4 in 10 children have development problems as they grow up



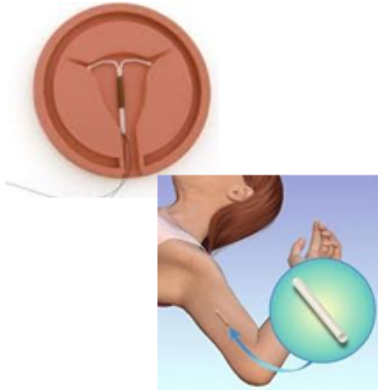
If a mother takes valproate when she is pregnant her child could have the following development problems:

- Late learning to walk and talk.
- Lower intelligence
- Poor speech and language
- Memory problems



If a mother takes valproate while she is pregnant her baby is more likely to have Autism Spectrum Disorder

Contraceptives for girls and women who are old enough to get pregnant



You must use **effective contraceptives** while you are taking valproate.

The doctor explained to me that **effective contraceptive** includes: using a coil and contraceptive implant.



You must use contraceptives even if you are not sexually active at the moment.



You should talk to your doctor about the best type of contraceptive for you.

I am not old enough to get pregnant and starting treatment with valproate



If you are too young to get pregnant your doctor will explain the risks of valproate to your parents or carers.



Your doctor should only give you valproate if other medicines do not work.



You should talk to your doctor as soon as you have your first period to make sure that valproate is still the best medicine for you.

I am old enough to get pregnant and starting treatment with valproate



If you are old enough to get pregnant your doctor will ask you to take a pregnancy test before giving you valproate.



You will need to do regular pregnancy tests while you are taking valproate.



While you are taking valproate you will need to see your doctor every year to make sure that it is still the best medicine for you.

This is called an **annual review meeting**.


Annual Risk Acknowledgement form for users of Sodium Valproate

	If you use valproate while you are pregnant, your child has a high risk of serious harm.
	This form confirms that you or your partner, parent or responsible person understands the risks of using valproate.

Please complete Part A of this form (below)

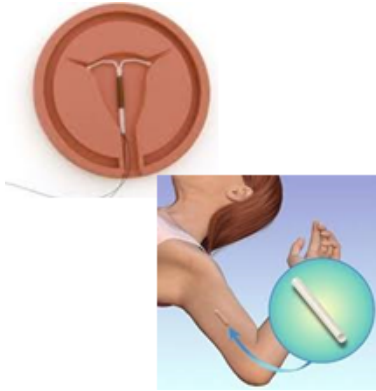
Please tick to say that you understand.

This form expires 12 months from this date.
A new form should be completed at each annual review.



At your annual review meeting your doctor will ask you to sign an Annual Risk Acknowledgement Form to make sure that you understand the risks of taking valproate.

I am taking valproate and I don't want to get pregnant



If you are taking valproate and you do not plan to have a baby you must use contraceptives all the time.



You should talk to your doctor about the best type of contraceptive for you.



You will need to do regular pregnancy tests while you are taking valproate.

This is to make sure you are not pregnant.



I am taking valproate and I don't want to get pregnant



While you are taking valproate you will need to see your doctor every year to make sure that it is still the best medicine for you.


This is called an **annual review meeting**.

Annual Risk Acknowledgement form for users of Sodium Valproate

	If you use valproate while you are pregnant, your child has a high risk of serious harm.
	This form confirms that you or your carer, parent or responsible person understands the risks of using valproate.

Please complete Part A of this form (below)
Please tick to say that you understand.

This form expires 12 months from this date
A new form should be completed at each annual review.



At your annual review meeting your doctor will ask you to sign an Annual Risk Acknowledgement Form to make sure that you understand the risks of taking valproate.

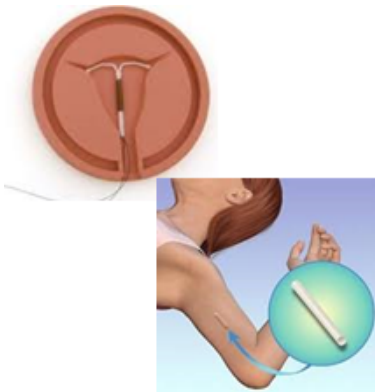
I am taking valproate and I want to have a baby



If you want to have a baby you **must** talk to your doctor **first**. You must keep using contraceptives.



You **must** keep taking valproate until you speak with your doctor.



You **must** keep using contraceptives until you speak with your doctor.

I am taking valproate and I want to have a baby



Valproate can harm babies at any time in your pregnancy.



Your doctor will need to change your medicine a long time before you get pregnant.



This is to make sure that your new medicine is working properly.

I am taking valproate and I think I am pregnant



You must talk to your doctor as soon as you think you are pregnant.



You **must** keep taking valproate until you speak with your doctor.



Your doctor will talk to you about changing to another medicine.

I am taking valproate and I think I am pregnant




Sometimes it is not possible to change to a different medicine.



If this happens your doctor will talk to you about your options.

Annual Risk Acknowledgement form for users of Sodium Valproate

	If you use valproate while you are pregnant, your child has a high risk of serious harm.
	This form confirms that you or your partner, parent or responsible person understands the risks of using valproate.

Please complete Part A of this form (below)

Please tick to say that you understand:

This form expires 12 months from this date.
A new form should be completed at each annual review.

Your doctor will ask you to sign an Annual Risk Acknowledgement Form to make sure that you understand the risks of taking valproate.

Key information to remember



Valproate is also called Epilim, Depakote, Convulex, Episenta, Epival, Kentlim, Orlept, Sodium Valproate, Syonell or Valpal.

You may see one of these names on your prescription or on the box of your medicine.

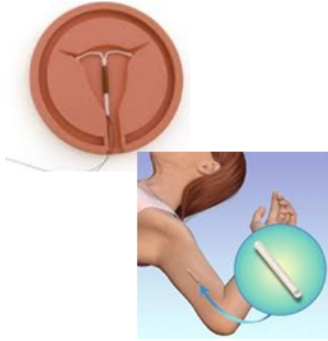


Valproate is used to treat conditions such as epilepsy or bipolar disorder.



Valproate can seriously harm an unborn baby.

Key information to remember



Always use an effective contraceptive while you are taking valproate



Talk to your doctor as soon as possible if you think you are pregnant.



Talk to your doctor if you are thinking about having a baby.

Don't stop taking valproate or stop contraception until you have talked to your doctor.

Key things to remember



Remember to see your doctor every year to talk about whether valproate is still the best medicine for you.

Annual Risk Acknowledgement form for users of Sodium Valproate

	If you use valproate while you are pregnant, your child has a high risk of serious harm.
	This form confirms that you or your carer, parent or responsible person understands the risks of using valproate.

Please complete Part A of this form (below)
Please tick to say that you understand.

This form expires 12 months from this date.
A new form should be completed at each annual review.



Sign the Annual Risk Acknowledgement Form to say that you understand the risks of taking valproate.

Key information to remember

You can find more information about epilepsy from the following organisations:

Epilepsy Action

www.epilepsy.org.uk

0808 800 5050

Epilepsy Society

www.epilepsysociety.org.uk

01494 601 400

Young Epilepsy

www.youngepilepsy.org.uk

01342 831 342



You can find more information about bipolar disorder from the following organisations:

Bipolar UK

www.bipolaruk.org

0333 323 3880

Mind

www.mind.org.uk

0300 123 3393

