

Depakote (valproate/divalproex)



What is it usually prescribed for?

Bipolar disorder, seizures (convulsions), migraine headaches, and other conditions.



How does it work?

Depakote helps improve thinking, mood, and behavior. Depakote is thought to boost the brain chemical GABA (gamma-aminobutyric acid).



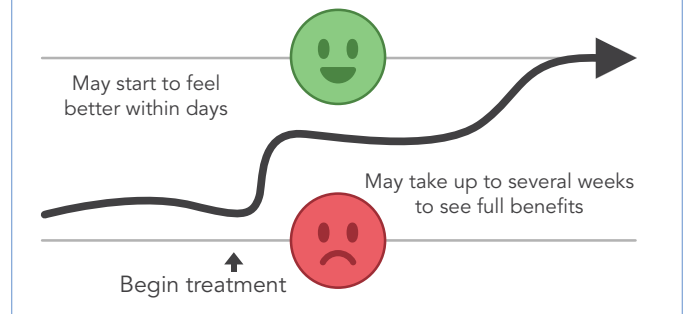
What should I expect?

Symptoms get better the longer you take Depakote. Some symptoms may improve within a few days. It may take up to several weeks for you to see the full benefits of Depakote.

Your healthcare professional will start with a low dose that is slowly increased to find the best dose that works for you. Tell your healthcare professional about how it's working for you and if you have any side effects so the dose can be changed if needed.

Take Depakote exactly as prescribed to get the full benefit of this medicine.

WHEN WILL I FEEL BETTER?



Will I have side effects?

You may or may not have side effects when taking Depakote. Some side effects go away with time, but others require changes to the dose.

In most cases, treatment is necessary for a long time to control symptoms. Some side effects continue or worsen with long-term use, like problems with blood clotting (low platelets) or problems with the liver or pancreas.

Long-term use will require regular liver function tests and platelet counts.

What are common side effects and what can I do to feel better?

If your side effects are mild, talk to your healthcare professional about them at your next appointment.

	Drink less caffeine and alcohol	Do more exercise	Drink plenty of water	Healthcare professional suggestion
Nausea or throwing up	X		X	
Diarrhea	X		X	
Headache	X	X	X	
Feeling dizzy	X		X	
Trouble sleeping	X	X		

Note: This is not a complete list of side effects; other side effects are possible. Before starting Depakote, tell your healthcare professional about all the medicines you are taking to avoid unexpected side effects.



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YOU'RE NOT ALONE!

In 2019, Depakote was prescribed over 5.8 million times in the United States.

What should I avoid?






Don't start any new medicines, over-the-counter drugs, or herbal remedies without talking to your healthcare professional first. There are many interactions with medicines that may increase your chance of side effects.

Do not suddenly stop taking Depakote unless your healthcare professional has told you to because your symptoms may return.

Use less alcohol and recreational drugs. They may decrease the benefits of Depakote and increase the chance of side effects.

Avoid pregnancy while taking this medicine. Depakote is associated with birth defects.

WHAT IS MOST IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER

-  It may take up to several weeks for you to feel the full benefits of taking this medicine
-  Tell your healthcare professional about any troubling side effects so that you can work together to address them
-  Take exactly as prescribed and do not suddenly stop taking this medicine unless told to do so by a healthcare professional
-  Do not start any new medicines, over-the-counter drugs, or herbal remedies without talking to your healthcare professional
-  Get medical care right away if you have serious side effects



When should I call a healthcare professional right away or visit the emergency room?

If you have any **serious** side effects. Here are some examples of serious side effects:

- Unusual thoughts or behavior, including thoughts about suicide or hurting yourself
- Easy bruising, unusual bleeding
- Fever, swollen glands, mouth sores
- Confusion, tiredness, cold feeling, vomiting, change in your mental state
- Severe drowsiness
- Worsening seizures (convulsions)

If you think there has been an overdose, call your poison control center (800-222-1222) or get medical care right away.



Where can I get more help?

National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) – nami.org

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline – Call 1-800-273-TALK (8255)

Crisis Text Line – Text "HELLO" to 741741



Notes and questions for my next appointment

