



**Brainwave The Irish Epilepsy Association**  
**249 Crumlin Road**  
**Dublin 12**

Tel: 01-4557500 Email: [info@epilepsy.ie](mailto:info@epilepsy.ie) Web: [www.epilepsy.ie](http://www.epilepsy.ie)

## DRUG TREATMENT OF EPILEPSY

FIRST LINE DRUGS	TREATMENT	POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS
Carbamazepine (Tegretol) Tegretol Retard)	Generalised tonic clonic and partial seizures	Skin rash, double vision, unsteadiness and nausea may occur initially or if the dose is too high
Ethosuximide (Zarontin) (Emeside)	Absences only	Nausea and drowsiness may occur
Phenytoin (Epanutin)	Generalised tonic clonic and partial seizures. Serum level monitoring essential.	Skin rash, drowsiness, unsteadiness and slurred speech. Coarsening of facial features, overgrowth of gums and acne may be a problem with prolonged therapy.
Sodium Valproate (Epilim)	Generalised tonic clonic and partial seizures and absences.	Drowsiness and tremor are infrequent side effects. Hair loss occurs in some people and on occasions excessive weight gain may occur. However these effects are usually reversible if the dose is reduced.
<b>SECOND LINE DRUGS</b>		
Clobazam (Frisium)	Generalised tonic clonic and partial seizures, but tolerance frequently develops.	Drowsiness may occur but this drug is much less sedating than clonazepam or diazepam
Clonazepam (Rivotril)	Partial seizures, absences and myoclonic jerks	Drowsiness and sedation are quite common, but these may wear off, and tolerance tends to develop
Gabapentin (Neurontin)	Partial seizures where previous treatment has been ineffective	Drowsiness, dizziness headache, fatigue.
Lamotrigine (Lamictal)	Partial and generalised tonic clonic seizures where previous treatment has been ineffective	Skin rash, drowsiness, double vision, dizziness and headache.
Phenobarbitone	Generalised tonic clonic and partial seizures	Nausea, unsteadiness and drowsiness may occur initially but sedation and slowing of mental performance may persist.
Primidone (Mysoline)	As phenobarbitone (Primidone is partly metabolised to phenobarbitone in the body)	As Phenobarbitone
Vigabatrin (Sabril)	Partial and secondarily generalised seizures where previous treatment has been ineffective	Drowsiness, nausea, behaviour and mood changes. Psychotic reactions have been reported