



[Home](#)

## 2. Carbamazepine

# Carbamazepine

**Generic name:** carbamazepine (oral) [ *kar-ba-MAZ-e-peen* ]

**Brand names:** [Epitol](#), [Equetro](#), [Tegretol](#), [Tegretol XR](#)

**Drug class:** [Dibenzazepine anticonvulsants](#)

Medically reviewed by [Sophia Entringer, PharmD](#). Last updated on Sep 25, 2023.

[Uses](#)   [Warnings](#)   [Before taking](#)   [Dosage](#)   [Side effects](#)   [Interactions](#)

## What is carbamazepine?

Carbamazepine is an anticonvulsant. It works by decreasing nerve impulses that cause seizures and nerve pain, such as trigeminal neuralgia and diabetic neuropathy.

Carbamazepine is also used to treat [bipolar disorder](#).

Carbamazepine may also be used for purposes not listed in this medication guide.

## Warnings

You should not take carbamazepine if you have a history of bone marrow suppression, if you are allergic to it, or take an antidepressant such as amitriptyline, desipramine, doxepin, imipramine, or nortriptyline.

TELL YOUR DOCTOR ABOUT ALL OTHER MEDICINES YOU USE. Some drugs can raise or lower your blood levels of carbamazepine, which may cause side effects or make this medicine less effective. Carbamazepine can also affect blood levels of certain other drugs, making them less effective or increasing side effects.

Carbamazepine may cause serious blood problems or a life-threatening [skin rash](#) or allergic reaction. **Call your doctor if you have a fever, unusual weakness, bleeding, bruising, or a skin rash that causes blistering and peeling.**

Some people have thoughts about suicide while taking seizure medicine. Stay alert to changes in your mood or symptoms. Report any new or worsening symptoms to your doctor.

Do not stop taking this medicine without asking your doctor first, even if you feel fine.

**If you are pregnant, do not start or stop taking carbamazepine without your doctor's advice.**

## Before taking this medicine

You should not take carbamazepine if you have a history of bone marrow suppression, or if you are allergic to carbamazepine or to an antidepressant such as [amitriptyline](#), [desipramine](#), [doxepin](#), [imipramine](#), or [nortriptyline](#).

Do not use carbamazepine if you have taken an MAO inhibitor in the past 14 days. A dangerous drug interaction could occur. MAO inhibitors include [furazolidone](#), [isocarboxazid](#), [linezolid](#), [phenelzine](#), [rasagiline](#), [selegiline](#), and [tranylcypromine](#).

Carbamazepine may cause severe or life-threatening skin rash, and especially in people of Asian ancestry. Your doctor may recommend a blood test before you start the medication to determine your risk.

Tell your doctor if you have ever had:

- heart problems;
- liver or kidney disease;
- [glaucoma](#);
- porphyria;
- low sodium levels;
- [depression](#), [mood disorder](#); or
- suicidal thoughts or actions.

You may have thoughts about suicide while taking carbamazepine. Your doctor should check your progress at regular visits. Your family or other caregivers should also be alert to changes in your mood or symptoms.

Do not **start** or **stop** taking seizure medication during pregnancy without your doctor's advice. Carbamazepine may harm an unborn baby, but having a seizure during pregnancy could harm both mother and baby. The benefit of preventing seizures may outweigh any risks to the baby.

**Tell your doctor right away if you become pregnant.**

If you are pregnant, your name may be listed on a pregnancy registry to track the effects of this medicine on the baby.

Carbamazepine can make [birth control pills](#) or implants less effective. Use a barrier form of [birth control](#) (such as a condom or diaphragm with spermicide) **to prevent pregnancy**.

You should not breastfeed while you are using carbamazepine.

 [Carbamazepine pregnancy and breastfeeding warnings](#) (more detail)

## How should I take carbamazepine?

Take carbamazepine exactly as prescribed by your doctor. Follow all directions on your prescription label and read all medication guides or instruction sheets. Your doctor may occasionally change your dose.

Take with food.

Swallow the **extended-release tablet or capsule** whole and do not crush, chew, or break it. Tell your doctor if you cannot swallow a pill whole.

The chewable tablet must be chewed before you swallow it.

Shake the **oral suspension** (liquid) before you measure a dose. Use the dosing syringe provided, or use a medicine dose-measuring device (not a kitchen spoon).

It may take up to 4 weeks before your symptoms improve. Keep using the medication as directed and **call your doctor promptly if this medicine seems to stop working as well in preventing your seizures.**

You will need frequent medical tests.

Store at room temperature away from moisture, heat, and light.

Do not stop using carbamazepine suddenly, even if you feel fine. Stopping suddenly may cause increased seizures. Follow your doctor's instructions about tapering your dose.

 [Detailed Carbamazepine dosage information](#)

## What happens if I miss a dose?

Take the medicine as soon as you can, but skip the missed dose if it is almost time for your next dose. Do not take two doses at one time.

## What happens if I overdose?

Seek emergency medical attention or call the Poison Help line at 1-800-222-1222.

Overdose symptoms may include severe drowsiness, weak or shallow breathing, and loss of consciousness.

## What to avoid

Drinking alcohol with this medicine can cause side effects, and can also increase your risk of seizures.

[Grapefruit](#) may interact with carbamazepine and lead to unwanted side effects. Avoid the use of grapefruit products.

Avoid driving or hazardous activity until you know how this medicine will affect you. Your reactions could be impaired.

Carbamazepine could make you sunburn more easily. Avoid sunlight or tanning beds. Wear protective clothing and use [sunscreen](#) (SPF 30 or higher) when you are outdoors.

## Carbamazepine side effects

Get emergency medical help if you have **signs of an allergic reaction to carbamazepine** ([hives](#), difficult breathing, swelling in your face or throat) **or a severe skin reaction** ([fever](#), [sore throat](#), burning in your eyes, skin pain, red or purple skin rash that spreads and causes blistering and peeling).

**Seek medical treatment if you have a serious drug reaction that can affect many parts of your body.** Symptoms may include: skin rash, fever, swollen glands, muscle aches, severe weakness, unusual bruising, or yellowing of your skin or eyes.

Report any new or worsening symptoms to your doctor, such as: sudden mood or behavior changes, depression, [anxiety](#), [insomnia](#), or if you feel agitated, hostile, restless, irritable, or have thoughts about suicide or hurting yourself.

Call your doctor at once if you have:

- a skin rash, no matter how mild;

- loss of appetite, right-sided upper stomach pain, dark urine;
- slow, fast, or pounding heartbeats;
- **anemia or other blood problems** - fever, chills, sore throat, mouth sores, bleeding gums, nosebleeds, pale skin, easy bruising, unusual tiredness, feeling light-headed or short of breath; or
- **low levels of sodium in the body** - [headache](#), confusion, severe weakness, feeling unsteady, increased seizures.

Common carbamazepine side effects may include:

- [dizziness](#), loss of coordination, problems with walking;
- nausea, [vomiting](#); or
- drowsiness.

This is not a complete list of side effects and others may occur. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.

 [Carbamazepine side effects](#) (more detail)

## Related/similar drugs

### Lybalvi

Lybalvi is used to treat adults with manic or mixed episodes associated with bipolar I disorder ...

#### Reviews & ratings

8.1 / 10

[16 Reviews](#)

[View more](#)

### Fanapt

Fanapt (iloperidone) is an antipsychotic medication used to treat schizophrenia. Includes Fanapt ...

#### Reviews & ratings

6.4 / 10

[30 Reviews](#)

[View more](#)

#### FEATURED

### Caplyta

Caplyta (lumateperone) may be used to treat schizophrenia or depression associated with bipolar ...

### Reviews & ratings

6.6 / 10

[184 Reviews](#)

[View more](#)

### Abilify

Abilify is an antipsychotic medicine used to treat the symptoms of schizophrenia and bipolar ...

### Reviews & ratings

6.1 / 10

[1,187 Reviews](#)

[View more](#)

### Olanzapine

Olanzapine (brand name Zyprexa) is an atypical antipsychotic that may be used to treat adults and ...

### Reviews & ratings

5.9 / 10

[1,091 Reviews](#)

[View more](#)

### Lorazepam

Lorazepam is in a group of drugs called benzodiazepines and is used to treat anxiety disorders ...

### Reviews & ratings

7.9 / 10

[1,054 Reviews](#)

[View more](#)

### Pregabalin

Pregabalin may be used to treat certain types of pain and used in combination with other ...

### Reviews & ratings

6.8 / 10

[1,000 Reviews](#)

1,668 Reviews

[View more](#)

## Aripiprazole

Easy-to-read patient leaflet for aripiprazole. Includes indications, proper use, special ...

### Reviews & ratings

6.1 / 10

[1,540 Reviews](#)

[View more](#)

## Clonazepam

Clonazepam is used to treat seizures and panic disorder. Learn about side effects, interactions and ...

### Reviews & ratings

8.2 / 10

[2,176 Reviews](#)

[View more](#)

## What other drugs will affect carbamazepine?

Sometimes it is not safe to use certain medications at the same time. Some drugs can affect your blood levels of other drugs you take, which may increase side effects or make the medications less effective.

Using carbamazepine with other drugs that make you drowsy can worsen this effect. Ask your doctor before using opioid medication, a sleeping pill, a muscle relaxer, or medicine for anxiety, depression, or seizures.

Many drugs can interact with carbamazepine, and some drugs should not be used together. This includes prescription and over-the-counter medicines, [vitamins](#), and [herbal products](#). Not all possible interactions are listed in this medication guide. Tell your doctor about all your current medicines and any medicine you start or stop using.

 [Carbamazepine drug interactions](#) (more detail)

## Does carbamazepine interact with my other drugs?

Enter medications to view a detailed interaction report using our [Drug Interaction Checker](#).

carbamazepine

+

## More about carbamazepine

- [Check interactions](#)
- [Compare alternatives](#)
- [Pricing & coupons](#)
- [Reviews \(351\)](#)
- [Drug images](#)
- [Side effects](#)
- [Dosage information](#)
- [Patient tips](#)
- [During pregnancy](#)
- [Drug class: dibenzazepine anticonvulsants](#)
- [Breastfeeding](#)
- [En español](#)

## Patient resources

- [Carbamazepine \(Intravenous\) advanced reading](#)

## Other brands

[Tegretol](#), [Carbatrol](#), [Epitol](#), [Equetro](#), [Carnexiv](#)

## Professional resources

- [Carbamazepine monograph](#)
- [Carbamazepine \(FDA\)](#)
- [Carbamazepine Capsules \(FDA\)](#)
- [Carbamazepine Chewable \(FDA\)](#)
- [Carbamazepine ER \(FDA\)](#)
- [Carbamazepine Oral Suspension \(FDA\)](#)

## Other brands

[Tegretol](#), [Carbatrol](#), [Epitol](#), [Equetro](#), [Carnexiv](#)

## Related treatment guides

- [Bipolar Disorder](#)
- [Borderline Personality Disorder](#)

- [Cluster-Tic Syndrome](#)
- [Cyclothymic Disorder](#)

## Further information

Remember, keep this and all other medicines out of the reach of children, never share your medicines with others, and use carbamazepine only for the indication prescribed.

Always consult your healthcare provider to ensure the information displayed on this page applies to your personal circumstances.

[Medical Disclaimer](#)

Copyright 1996-2025 Cerner Multum, Inc. Version: 18.01.

### DRUG STATUS

#### Availability

**Rx** Prescription only

#### [Pregnancy & Lactation](#)


 Risk data available

#### CSA Schedule\*

**N/A** Not a controlled drug



#### Approval History

 Drug history at FDA



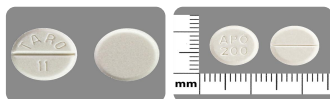
## User Reviews & Ratings

7.0 / 10

[351 Reviews](#)

## Images

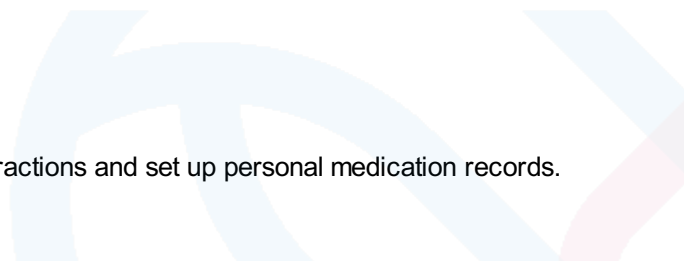
[Carbamazepine 200 mg \(TARO 11\)](#)



[View larger images](#)

## Drugs.com Mobile App

Access drug & treatment information, identify pills, check interactions and set up personal medication records.







## About

[About Drugs.com](#)

[Advertising policy](#)

[Attribution & citations](#)

## Terms & privacy

[Terms of use](#)

[Editorial policy](#)

[Privacy policy](#)

## Support

[Help center](#)

[Sitemap](#)

[Contact us](#)



[Subscribe to our newsletter](#) for the latest medication news, new drug approvals and FDA alerts.

**Drugs.com** provides accurate and independent information on more than 24,000 prescription drugs, over-the-counter medicines and natural products. This material is provided for educational purposes only and is not intended for medical advice, diagnosis or treatment. Data sources include Micromedex (updated 7 Apr 2025), Cerner Multum™ (updated 13 Apr 2025), ASHP (updated 10 Apr 2025) and others.



Ad Choices  
ADVERTISEMENT



Copyright © 2000-2025 Drugs.com. All rights reserved.