



[Home](#)

2. Depakote

Depakote

Generic name: [divalproex sodium](#) [dye-val-PRO-ex]

Drug class: [Fatty acid derivative anticonvulsants](#)

Medically reviewed by [Sophia Entringer, PharmD](#). Last updated on Aug 23, 2023.

[Uses](#) [Warnings](#) [Dosage](#) [What to avoid](#) [Side effects](#) [Interactions](#)

What is Depakote?

Depakote affects chemicals in the body that may be involved in causing seizures. Depakote is used to treat various types of seizure disorders. This medicine is sometimes used together with other seizure medications.

Depakote tablets and capsules are used to treat [seizures](#) in people with [epilepsy](#) who are at least 10 years old. The tablets are sometimes used together with other seizure medications.

Depakote tablets are also used in adults to prevent [migraine](#) headaches, or to treat manic episodes related to [bipolar disorder](#) (manic depression).

Warnings

Depakote can cause liver failure that may be fatal, especially in children under age 2 and in people with liver problems caused by certain genetic disorders.

You should not use divalproex if you have liver disease, a urea cycle disorder, low platelet counts, or a genetic disorder such as Alpers' disease or Alpers-Huttenlocher syndrome.

Do not start or stop taking Depakote during pregnancy without your doctor's advice. Divalproex sodium may harm an unborn baby, but having a seizure during pregnancy could harm both mother and baby. **Do not use Depakote to prevent migraine headaches if you are pregnant.**

Call your doctor at once if the person taking this medicine has signs of liver or pancreas problems, such as: loss of appetite, upper stomach pain (that may spread to your back), ongoing [nausea](#) or [vomiting](#), dark urine, swelling in the face, or [jaundice](#) (yellowing of the skin or eyes).

Do not stop using this medicine without your doctor's advice. Stopping suddenly may cause a serious, life-threatening type of seizure.

You should not use Depakote if you are allergic to divalproex sodium, or if you have:

- liver disease;

- a urea cycle disorder; or
- a genetic mitochondrial (MYE-toe-KON-dree-al) disorder such as Alpers' disease or Alpers-Huttenlocher syndrome, especially in a child younger than 2 years old.

Divalproex sodium can cause liver failure that may be fatal, especially in children under age 2 and in people with liver problems caused by a genetic mitochondrial disorder.

To make sure this medicine is safe for you, tell your doctor if you have:

- liver problems caused by a genetic mitochondrial disorder;
- depression, mental illness, or suicidal thoughts or actions; or
- a family history of a urea cycle disorder or infant deaths with unknown cause.

Some people have thoughts about suicide while taking Depakote. Your doctor will need to check your progress at regular visits. Your family or other caregivers should also be alert to changes in your mood or symptoms.

Using Depakote during pregnancy may increase the risk of serious birth defects that can develop early in pregnancy, even before you know you are pregnant. Using this medicine during pregnancy can also affect cognitive ability (reasoning, intelligence, problem-solving) later in your child's life. However, having a seizure during pregnancy could harm both the mother and the baby.

If you take Depakote for seizures or manic episodes: The benefit of preventing seizures or manic episodes may outweigh any risks posed by this medicine. There may be other medications that are safer to use during pregnancy. **Do not start or stop taking this medicine without your doctor's advice.**

Do not use Depakote to prevent migraine headaches if you are pregnant or you could become pregnant.

If you are not pregnant, use effective birth control to prevent pregnancy while using Depakote. Tell your doctor if you start or stop using hormonal contraception that contains estrogen ([birth control pills](#), injections, implants, skin patches, and vaginal rings). Estrogen can interact with divalproex sodium and make it less effective in preventing seizures.

It may not be safe to breastfeed while using this medicine. Ask your doctor about any risk.

How should I take Depakote?

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

Drink plenty of water while you are taking this medication. Your dose may need to be changed if you do not get enough fluids each day.

Swallow the **capsule** or **tablet** whole and do not crush, chew, break, or open it.

If you cannot swallow a sprinkle capsule whole, open it and sprinkle the medicine into a spoonful of pudding or applesauce. Swallow the mixture right away. Do not save it for later use.

You may need frequent blood tests.

If you need surgery, tell the surgeon ahead of time that you are using Depakote.

In case of emergency, wear or carry medical identification to let others know you use Depakote.

Do not stop using Depakote suddenly, even if you feel fine. Stopping suddenly may cause a serious, life-threatening type of seizure. Follow your doctor's instructions about tapering your dose.

Store at room temperature away from moisture and heat.

 [Detailed Depakote 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.

What to avoid

Drinking alcohol may increase certain side effects of divalproex.

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

Depakote side effects

Get emergency medical help if you have **signs of an allergic reaction to Depakote** (hives, difficult breathing, swelling in your face or throat) **or a severe skin reaction** (fever, sore throat, burning eyes, skin pain, red or purple skin rash with 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.

Call your doctor at once if the person taking this medicine has signs of liver or pancreas problems, such as: loss of appetite, upper stomach pain (that may spread to your back), ongoing nausea or vomiting, dark urine, swelling in the face, or jaundice (yellowing of the skin or eyes).

Report any new or worsening symptoms to your doctor, such as: mood or behavior changes, depression, anxiety, panic attacks, trouble sleeping, or if you feel impulsive, irritable, agitated, hostile, aggressive, restless, hyperactive (mentally or physically), or have thoughts about suicide or hurting yourself.

Call your doctor at once if you have any of these other side effects:

- easy bruising, unusual bleeding (nose, mouth, or gums), purple or red pinpoint spots under your skin;
- fever, swollen glands, mouth sores;
- confusion, tiredness, cold feeling, vomiting, change in your mental state;
- severe drowsiness; or

- worsening seizures.

Common Depakote side effects may include:

- nausea, vomiting, stomach pain, [diarrhea](#), [constipation](#);
- [headache](#), [back pain](#);
- [dizziness](#), drowsiness, weakness, tremors;
- memory problems, mood changes, trouble sleeping;
- bruising or bleeding;
- [runny nose](#), sore throat, cough, wheezing, trouble breathing;
- fever, flu symptoms;
- problems with walking or coordination;
- swelling in your hands or feet;
- blurred vision, double vision, unusual eye movements;
- ringing in your ears;
- rash, [hair loss](#); or
- changes in weight or appetite.

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.

 [Depakote 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](#)

Nurtec ODT

Nurtec ODT (rimegepant) is used to treat acute migraines and prevent episodic migraines, by ...

Reviews & ratings

6.3 / 10

[320 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](#)

Fanapt

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

Reviews & ratings

6.4 / 10

[30 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

[1,668 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 Depakote?

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.

Many drugs can interact with divalproex sodium. This includes prescription and over-the-counter medicines, [vitamins](#), and [herbal products](#). Not all possible interactions are listed here. Tell your doctor about all your current medicines and any medicine you start or stop using.

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

Does Depakote interact with my other drugs?

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

Depakote

+

Enter a drug name

Add

More about Depakote (divalproex sodium)

- [Check interactions](#)
- [Compare alternatives](#)
- [Pricing & coupons](#)
- [Reviews \(329\)](#)
- [Drug images](#)
- [Side effects](#)
- [Dosage information](#)
- [Patient tips](#)
- [During pregnancy](#)
- [Generic availability](#)
- [Support group](#)
- [Drug class: fatty acid derivative anticonvulsants](#)
- [Breastfeeding](#)
- [En español](#)

Professional resources

- [Depakote prescribing information](#)

Other formulations

- [Depakote ER](#)
- [Depakote Sprinkles](#)

Related treatment guides

- [Bipolar Disorder](#)
- [Mania](#)
- [Migraine Prevention](#)
- [Seizures](#)

- [Epilepsy](#)

Further information

Remember, keep this and all other medicines out of the reach of children, never share your medicines with others, and use Depakote 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: 14.01.

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

6.3 / 10

[329 Reviews](#)

Images

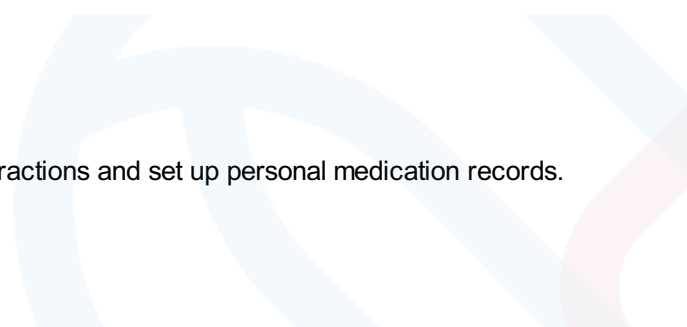
[Depakote 500 mg \(a NS\)](#)



[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.