

Zonegran® (Zonisamide)

What is Zonegran® (Zonisamide)?

Zonegran® is an anti-epileptic drug that has been used to treat patients with epilepsy since 2000. It is helpful in the treatment of Partial Seizures.

Starting the Medicine:

We usually gradually increase the dose, until your body gets adjusted to the medication. Since each patient is unique in that he/she breaks down the medication differently or may need a higher or lower dosage to control their seizures, there is no standard dose that is appropriate for all patients.

What is the Dosage of the Pill and What Does It Look Like?

100mg red and white capsule

What Side Effects Can Be Caused by Zonegran®?

Side effects can be dose related (common) and idiosyncratic (rare).

Common Dose-Related Side Effects:

Drowsiness, dizziness, loss of appetite, and headache may occur. These side effects are most frequent at the start of treatment, and they are temporary and usually go away as your body starts to adjust to the medication.

If you have these side effects, your doctor may:

- slow down the dosing schedule

- instruct you to take your pills with food since this will slow the rate at which the medicine gets into the blood, but will not affect the total amount that is absorbed.

Rare Side Effects:

Difficulty walking, double vision, kidney stones, and anxiety are rare side effects.

Skin Rash:

An allergic rash may occur with Zonegran®. If this occurs, contact your doctor immediately. Patients with known history of allergy to sulfa drugs should not take Zonegran®.

Pregnancy:

The effects of Zonegran® in human pregnancy are not known at this time. Any woman taking Zonegran® should talk to her doctor about this issue **before** becoming pregnant.

How Do I Take This Medication?

It is important to take your medication regularly since a stable blood level helps to reduce seizures. Therefore, the medication does not work when taken on an as needed basis. It is usually prescribed in one dose taken at bedtime.

Can I Take Zonegran® With Other Medications?

Yes, Zonegran® may be taken with most medications. Always tell your doctor what other medications you are taking.

What Should I Do If I Miss a Dose?

If you miss a dose, take it as soon as you remember. You may have to change your usual time taking Zonegran® when you are trying to make up the missing dose.

Will My Blood Count and Liver Enzymes be Checked?

Although Zonegran® rarely causes problems with blood cell counts or the liver, your doctor may check these labs while you are taking the medication.

Is My Blood Checked for Zonegran®?

Currently, little is known about the therapeutic range for blood levels for Zonegran. ® Therefore, levels may not routinely be checked. Dosing is usually based on patient tolerance and effectiveness in seizure control.

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