

Generic Name: Ethosuximide
Brand Name: Zarontin

What Is It Used For?

- Decreasing seizure activity in absence seizures.

How Long Does The Medicine Take to Work?

- 7-10 days

What Are The Important Safety Concerns?

- When first starting the medicine, your child may be slightly drowsy and dizzy.
- Only adjust the dosage as recommended by your health care provider. They will usually increase this medication slowly to avoid side effects. Never increase the dosage more than **once per week** unless directed otherwise.
- Once you have started with one brand of the medication stay with it. Avoid switching between different brands.
- Check with your pharmacist before taking herbal medications and/or over-the-counter medications. They may have adverse effects if taken with anti-seizure medications.
- Do not stop taking this medication suddenly because this could result in seizures.
- It is important to keep a record of your child's seizures and side effects to determine how well he/she is responding to the medication.

Does My Child Need Bloodwork With This Medication?

- A blood test will be done before starting this medication to check your child's liver function and blood counts. If the blood tests are normal, it is very safe for your child to take this medication.
- Routine blood work may be done to help determine the best dosage for your child, and also if he/she has side effects to the medication.
- If your child is required to have blood work it must be done **BEFORE** he/she gets the medication. This is called a trough level. This level usually falls between 350 and 700.

What Are The Possible Side Effects?

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| • Nausea & Vomiting* | • Diarrhea* | • Irritability |
| • Drowsiness* | • Dizziness | • Loss of Coordination |
| • Fatigue* | • Blurred Vision | • Behavior changes |
| • Headache* | • Constipation | • Sleep Disturbances |
| • Hiccups* | • Cramps | • Tongue Swelling |
| • Depression | • Abdominal pain | • Weight Loss* |

*more common side effect

How Do I Give The Medication?

- Do not chew or crush the capsules.
- Give with food or milk to reduce stomach upset and/or to improve the taste if needed. Do not give with an antacid medication.
- Give your child the medication as close to the same time as possible each day and only the amount prescribed.
- If your child misses a dose, give the dose as soon as you remember or can. If the next dose of the medicine needs to be given in less than 4 hours, do **not** give the dose you forgot. Give the next dose a little earlier and then return to giving the medicine at the usual times after that.
- If your child vomits within 30 minutes of taking the medication, repeat the dose.
- If your child vomits after 30 minutes of taking the medication, do not repeat the dose.

What Medications May Alter The Effectiveness Of This Drug?

- Phenytoin (Dilantin) - decreases the effect of Ethosuximide.
- Ethosuximide - can increase or decrease the amount of Valproic Acid (Depakene, Epival) in your child's body.

When Do I Call My Health Care Provider?

Call your health care provider or go to your nearest emergency room if you are concerned about your child in any way. With Ethosuximide the following would be of concern.

- A rash
- A change in seizure pattern
- Rare psychotic reactions have occurred in young adults with a history of mental disorders
- Blurred vision
- Problems with coordination
- Tiny purple spots on skin

What Are The Available Forms And Dosages?

- 250 mg Capsule
- 250 mg/5 ml Syrup