

A medication information leaflet for paediatric patients

## PHENYTOIN

Other names: Dilantin®



**Important note:** The following information is intended to add to, not replace, the knowledge and judgment of your doctor, pharmacist or other health care professional.

**The name of your child's medication is: Phenytoin**

### Why is your child taking this medicine?

Phenytoin is used in epilepsy to control seizures (fits). Sometimes it is used alone or in combination with other anti-epileptic drugs.

### When to give this medicine to your child

- Give exactly as directed by your doctor or pharmacist, never give more than the prescribed dose.
- Give phenytoin with food or following meals at the same time(s) every day. Marking a calendar may be a helpful reminder.
- If giving your child phenytoin suspension, carefully measure each dose with an oral syringe or medicine measure (available from your community pharmacy). Do not use a kitchen teaspoon as it will not give the right amount.
- Ensure you always have a supply of medicine on hand.

**DO NOT STOP** phenytoin without your doctor's permission

### What should you do if your child misses a dose

Give the dose as soon as possible except when it is close to the time for the next dose. If it is almost time for the next dose, skip the missed dose and return to the regular dosing schedule. You should not give two doses at the same time.

### What should you do if your child vomits after a dose

If the vomiting occurs less than 15 minutes after the medicine is given, give the entire dose again. If more than 15 minutes have passed, do not give it again until the next scheduled dose.

## Side effects

Unfortunately as well as having good effects, most medicines have some effects on the body that are unwanted. These are called *side effects*.

Call your doctor or speak to your pharmacist **immediately** if your child has any of these side effects:

- rash, (usually affects the whole body but may just affect the face)
- increase in the number of fits
- slurred speech, severe confusion or unsteadiness
- blurred or double vision
- uncontrolled eye or body movements

Tell your doctor or pharmacist if your child has these side effects:

- loss of appetite, nausea or vomiting
- drowsiness or dizziness, forgetfulness or reduced concentration
- nervousness or trouble sleeping
- constipation
- excess hair growth (common in young girls)
- coarsening of facial features (e.g. thickening of the lips)
- swollen, tender gums (common in children) – brush teeth with a soft toothbrush and have regular dental checks

The list of side effects is **not** complete. Tell your doctor or pharmacist if any side effect is of a concern to you.

## Other Medication

Tell your doctor or pharmacist if your child is taking any other medicines including herbal or complementary products and medicines you can buy without a prescription.

Phenytoin can interact with a large number of medicines e.g. antifungal medicines and antacids. Please check with your doctor or pharmacist when stopping or starting medicines as these may affect how well phenytoin controls your child's epilepsy.

## Storage

Keep all medicines out of the reach of children.

**Read this leaflet and discuss any questions you have about your medicines with your doctor or pharmacist.**