Using Gabapentin and Pregabalin for Chronic Pain
Medication name: __________________________

Dosage: __________________________
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How can these medications help me?
These medications are often used for treating several types of pain. Gabapentin and pregabalin belong to a group of medications that were originally used to treat seizures. These medications are now mostly used for pain caused by damaged nerves, such as shingles and diabetic nerve pain. There can also be improvement of pain-related sleep disturbances.
How do I take gabapentin and pregabalin?

• You must take these medications exactly as you are told.
• You should have a detailed medication dosing schedule from your doctor or the Pain Management Unit nurse.
• Never increase or decrease (take more or less of) your gabapentin or pregabalin unless your doctor or Pain Management Unit nurse tells you to.
• These medications may be taken with or without food.
• It is best to take these medications at evenly spaced times during the day.
• Do not stop taking these medications suddenly.

What if I miss a dose?

If you miss a dose, take it as soon as possible. If it is almost time for your next dose, skip the missed dose. Simply wait and restart these medications with your next scheduled dose. Do not double dose.
Special precautions

• Talk about these medications with your doctor if you are pregnant or breastfeeding.

• Seniors and people with kidney problems may need smaller doses.

• Do not take any new medications, including natural or herbal medicines, without talking to your doctor first.

• Check with your doctor before you take any other medications.

• Do not stop taking these medications unless your doctor tells you to stop.

• These medications do not interfere with the birth control pill.

• While taking these medications, use caution when driving, using heavy machinery, or doing other jobs that you need to pay attention to and stay alert for.

• Your doctor will want to check how you are doing. Keep all your appointments.

• Increase or decrease (take more or less of) your medications exactly as your doctor tells you. This will help you get the best pain relief and the fewest side effects.

• Do not stop taking these medications suddenly. Only decrease, increase, or stop taking these medications as your doctor tells you.

• Tell your dentist, new doctors, or pharmacists that you are taking these medications.

• Do not drink alcohol.
Common side effects

- Dizziness
- Drowsiness / sleepiness
- Blurred vision
- Dry mouth
- Swelling of arms and legs
- Trouble concentrating
- Weight gain
- Mood changes

You may have some side effects when you start taking these medications. Many side effects will pass within 2 weeks of starting it. If they are severe, contact your doctor or the Pain Management Unit.

Call your doctor right away if you have:

- Double vision
- Slurred speech
- Extreme drowsiness
- No energy
- Diarrhea
Call your doctor or the Pain Management Unit if these side effects are severe or continue without stopping:

- Fatigue
- Rhinitis (inflammation inside the nose)
- Headache
- Tremor (shaking)
- Sick to your stomach and vomiting
- Rash
- Ataxia (muscle coordination difficulties)
- Nystagmus (rapid eye movements you can’t control)
- Fever over 38°C for 24 hours

How should I store my medications?

- Keep these and all other medications out of the reach of children.
- Do not store them in a damp place such as your bathroom.
- Store at room temperature (15°-30°C). Do not store in the fridge.

If you have any questions, please ask.
We are here to help you.
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