
Sodium Valproate Users Urged to Use Contraception

Description

Getty Images Dad with baby
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Men prescribed sodium valproate are advised to employ contraception while undergoing treatment due to a potential slight increase in the risk of autism and other neurodevelopmental concerns for offspring conceived during this period.

They are urged to continue this practice and refrain from sperm donation until three months post-treatment termination.

Sodium valproate, available under various brand names including Epilim, Belvo, Convulex, and Depakote, is recognized for its efficacy in managing epilepsy and bipolar disorder.

The issuance of this warning by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) emphasizes the importance of consulting with healthcare providers prior to making any adjustments to medication.

'Safety issue'

This directive follows a comparable caution from the European Medicines Agency, based on data from national registries in Norway, Denmark, and Sweden indicating harm to 5% of children born to men using the drug.

While the study did not conclusively attribute the harm to sodium valproate or compare risks in children whose fathers were not medicated, the MHRA stressed the need for precautionary measures in addressing this critical safety concern.

Though it was previously known to impede fertility, the MHRA indicates that this effect is typically reversible following cessation of the drug.

Picture of young lady

Image not found or type unknown

Bridget, aged 26, diagnosed with Fetal Valproate Syndrome

The support group OACS, dedicated to assisting families impacted by Valproate medications, has censured the MHRA for its delayed scrutiny of safety concerns pertaining to fathers.

Karen Buck, a spokesperson who used the drug during pregnancy for epilepsy, recounts the devastating impact on her daughter Bridget, now 26, afflicted with Fetal Valproate Syndrome requiring round-the-clock care due to severe brain damage.

Karen's efforts to address this issue as early as 2016 were met with resistance from the regulator, underscoring the need for comprehensive awareness campaigns targeting both men and women.

In January, the MHRA cautioned against the use of sodium valproate in individuals under 55 unless all other treatment options have been exhausted and approved by two independent specialists. However, an estimated 65,000 individuals in this age group continue to utilize the drug.

Dr. Alison Cave, Chief Safety Officer at the MHRA, stresses the importance of not discontinuing medication without medical advice and urges patients to discuss their treatment plan at their next appointment.

Vocabulary List:

1. **Prescription** /prɪ'skrɪp.ʃən/ (noun): A written order from a doctor for a specific medicine.
2. **Efficacy** /'ɛfɪkəsi/ (noun): The ability to produce a desired or intended result.
3. **Neurodevelopmental** /,njʊə.rəʊ.dɪ'vel.əp.mənt.əl/ (adjective): Relating to the development of the nervous system.
4. **Precautionary** /prɪ'kɔː.ʃən.ər.i/ (adjective): Taken in advance to protect against possible danger.
5. **Cessation** /sə'seɪ.ʃən/ (noun): The fact or process of ending or being brought to an end.
6. **Afflicted** /ə'flɪk.tɪd/ (adjective): Having or suffering from a disease or injury.

Comprehension Questions



Multiple Choice

1. What is the reason men prescribed sodium valproate are advised to employ contraception?
Option: To avoid a potential increase in the risk of autism and neurodevelopmental concerns in offspring
Option: To prevent epilepsy
Option: To boost fertility
Option: To prevent bipolar disorder
2. Which organization emphasized the importance of consulting healthcare providers before making adjustments to medication?
Option: European Medicines Agency
Option: OACS
Option: Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA)
Option: Tata Group
3. What is sodium valproate commonly used for?
Option: Managing epilepsy and bipolar disorder
Option: Increasing fertility
Option: Preventing autism
Option: Leading to neurodevelopmental concerns
4. Which country's data showed harm to 5% of children born to men using sodium valproate?
Option: Sweden
Option: Norway
Option: Denmark
Option: Finland
5. What did the MHRA warn against in January regarding sodium valproate use?
Option: Use in the elderly
Option: Contraception use
Option: Sperm donation
Option: Use in individuals under 55 without exhausting other treatment options
6. Who stressed the importance of not discontinuing medication without medical advice?
Option: Dr. Alison Cave
Option: Karen Buck
Option: Bridget
Option: European Medicines Agency



Answer

Multiple Choice: 1. To avoid a potential increase in the risk of autism and neurodevelopmental concerns in offspring 2. Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) 3. Managing epilepsy and bipolar disorder 4. Norway 5. Use in individuals under 55 without exhausting other treatment options 6. Dr. Alison Cave

Vocabulary quizzes

Multiple Choice (Select the Correct answer for each question.)

1. What term refers to the ability of a product to provide a desired effect or result?
Option: Consequences
Option: Efficacy
Option: Neurodevelopmental
Option: Emotional
2. Which term is related to blood vessels?
Option: Statistics
Option: Gastroparesis
Option: Impact
Option: Vascular
3. What substance is known for its antioxidant properties found in foods like berries and tea?
Option: Polyphenol
Option: Prescription
Option: Detrimental
Option: Awareness
4. Which term refers to the process of putting a decision or plan into effect?
Option: Vascular
Option: Efficacy
Option: Implementation
Option: Ischemic
5. What word describes an option or choice that can be used instead of the usual?



- Option: Biliary
- Option: Alternative
- Option: Inflammation
- Option: Cessation

6. Which term relates to the growth and development of the nervous system?

- Option: Neurodevelopmental
- Option: Dangers
- Option: Complications
- Option: Retinopathy

7. What process often occurs in response to injury or infection?

- Option: Efficacy
- Option: Inflammation
- Option: Cues
- Option: Afflicted

8. Which term involves the collection analysis and interpretation of data?

- Option: Nutrition
- Option: Statistics
- Option: Precautionary
- Option: Mindful

9. What word describes a powerful effect or influence on something or someone?

- Option: Polyphenol
- Option: Impact
- Option: Profoundly
- Option: Intuitive

10. Which hormone raises glucose levels in the blood?

- Option: Glucagon
- Option: Ischemic
- Option: Cessation
- Option: Emotional

Gap-Fill (Fill in the blanks with the correct word from the vocabulary list.)

11. Smoking has many _____ effects on health.

12. Public _____ campaigns aim to educate people about important issues.



13. An _____ stroke occurs when blood flow to the brain is blocked.
14. The region was _____ by a severe drought.
15. Every action has its own set of _____.
16. A balanced diet is crucial for good _____.
17. She had an _____ understanding of the problem.
18. The movie had a very _____ ending.
19. Body language can provide important _____ about a person's feelings.
20. It is important to be _____ of your surroundings at all times.

Matching Sentences (Match each definition to the correct word from the vocabulary list.)

21. The surgery was successful but unexpected arose during recovery.
22. Patients with diabetes may experience delayed gastric emptying a condition known as .
23. The system is responsible for producing and transporting bile.
24. Diabetic is a complication that affects the eyes due to damage to blood vessels in the retina.
25. The loss of a loved one can impact a person affecting every aspect of their life.
26. The doctor recommended a series of measures to prevent the spread of infection.
27. Mountaineering involves many risks and that climbers must be aware of.
28. The film's powerful story evoked strong reactions from the audience.
29. The company announced the of its operations in the region.
30. Increasing public about mental health is crucial in breaking the stigma.

Answer

Multiple Choice: 1. Efficacy 2. Vascular 3. Polyphenol 4. Implementation 5. Alternative 6. Neurodevelopmental



7. Inflammation 8. Statistics 9. Impact 10. Glucagon

Gap-Fill: 11. Detrimental 12. Awareness 13. Ischemic 14. Afflicted 15. Consequences 16. Nutrition 17. Intuitive 18. Emotional 19. Cues 20. Mindful

Matching sentence: 1. Complications 2. Gastroparesis 3. Biliary 4. Retinopathy 5. Profoundly 6. Precautionary 7. Dangers 8. Emotional 9. Cessation 10. Awareness

CATEGORY

1. Health - LEVEL6

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