



# EPILEPSY & Medication

## Ethosuximide (ZARONTIN®)

### Used for:

- Absence seizures. (Typical absence seizures respond better than atypical absence seizures).

### Precautions:

- People with mixed types of seizures may get increased generalized tonic-clonic (grand mal) seizures if using ethosuximide alone.
- Inform your doctor if you are a person with liver or kidney disease or lung problems, or a hypersensitivity to succinimides.
- Use caution when operating machinery or driving automobiles.

### Possible side effects:

Depending on the individual, side effects may occur at varying degrees or not at all, including:

- Drowsiness.
- Fatigue.
- Headache.
- Hiccups.
- Nausea/vomiting.
- Epigastric and abdominal pain.
- Weight loss.
- Anorexia.
- Diarrhea.
- Loss of coordination.
- Irritability.
- Hyperactivity.
- Sleep disturbances.
- Inability to concentrate.
- Aggressiveness.
- Depression.
- Lupus-like syndrome.
- Blood cell disorder.

### Allergic Reaction/Idiosyncratic:

- Skin rash (if you notice a rash seek immediate medical help).
- Other side effects not listed above may occur in some patients. If you notice other effects, check with your physician.



## Tips For Using Ethosuximide (Zarontin®)

- Ethosuximide may be taken with food.
- If your seizures worsen contact your doctor.

## Drug Interactions:

- Ethosuximide may enhance the effects of central nervous system (CNS) medications or alcohol.
- No interactions with oral contraceptives.

*This material has been reviewed by the Ontario Drug Information and Research Centre and is offered to provide general information to the public. It is not intended to be taken as medical advice. Epilepsy Toronto and its advisors accept no liability. Consult your physician and/or neurologist with any questions you may have.*

## Daily Dosage:

Adults - 1000 to 1500 mg/day.

Children - 15 to 40 mg/kg/day.

Dosage of ethosuximide should be individualized according to each person's response and tolerance.

## Forms:

Capsules – 250 mg.

Syrup – 50 mg/ml.

## Missed Dose:

Try to take each dose at the scheduled time. If you miss a dose, take it as soon as remembered. Do not take it if it is near the time for the next dose, instead, skip the missed dose and resume your usual dosing schedule. Do not “double-up” the dose to catch up. If you skip a whole day, inform your doctor.

## Storage:

Store at room temperature (15 to 30°C), protect from light, heat, and moisture, and keep out of reach of children.

Do not use capsules that are discoloured.

## In Pregnancy:

- Anti-epileptic medications do slightly increase the risk of fetal abnormalities.
- Women who are considering pregnancy should first consult their doctor
- Ethosuximide freely enters the breastmilk. Consult your physician before breastfeeding if you are taking this drug.

## Warning:

Abrupt withdrawal of any anti-epileptic medication may trigger status epilepticus, a potentially fatal condition of continued seizures without recovery. When there is a need for reduction, discontinuation or substitution of the medication, this should be done gradually and under the physician's care. Never discontinue anti-epileptic medications or make changes in activities unless specifically advised to do so by an attending physician.