

Generic Prescribing of Lamotrigine, Topiramate and Levetiracetam

The antiepileptic drugs lamotrigine, topiramate and levetiracetam are now available as generics which are significantly cheaper than the branded products.

For patients taking lamotrigine, topiramate and levetiracetam, current evidence¹ supports switching from branded to generic products. Other antiepileptic drugs should continue to be prescribed by brand.

The change to a generic product should be discussed with the patient and the change made with the patient's agreement.

Contraindications to switching from branded to generic prescribing are:

- previous sensitivity to small dose changes
- experience of previous unsuccessful attempts to switch
- currently taking a sustained or modified release preparation of the drug
- current seizure control is good and serious consequences from a change in seizures (e.g. loss of driving licence)
- on a ketogenic diet
- allergic to excipients in the generic version.

A recent loss of seizure control, or the prescribing of additional or alternative antiepileptic drugs, is an opportunity to move to a generic version. Similarly, patients who plan to stop driving for 6 months may also be appropriate for switching to generic.

References

1: Consensus document "The Use of Generic Anti-Epileptics Drugs in Patients with Epilepsy" published in November 2012 by United Kingdom Clinical Pharmacists Association (UKCPA): Neurosciences Group and Pharmaceutical Market Support Group (PMSG): Generics Sub-Group.