

Lamotrigine and contraception

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Introduction

Lamotrigine is a medication which is taken for seizure control, prescribed by a neurologist, or as a mood stabiliser, prescribed by a psychiatrist. Some contraceptives and lamotrigine can affect each other. New guidance has been released relating to contraception and lamotrigine, which may affect your contraceptive choice. This leaflet is available to help you make the right decision for you about your contraception.

Combined hormonal contraception

These are contraceptives which contain the hormones oestrogen and progesterone. Combined hormonal contraception includes certain pills, the contraceptive patch and the vaginal ring. These are not recommended with lamotrigine as they may change the levels of lamotrigine in your blood, increasing the risk of seizures or mood changes. If you are unsure if your contraceptive falls into this category, please check with your doctor.

Progesterone only contraception

These are contraceptives which contain the single hormone progesterone, such as the progesterone only pill (POP), the contraceptive injection and contraceptive implant. These may interact with lamotrigine in different ways.

- In theory with the progesterone only pill (POP) and the contraceptive implant, there may be an increase in the chance of pregnancy when also taking lamotrigine. However, the evidence for this is limited and the risk is likely to be small. If you wish to use these contraceptives, the advice is to use condoms along with them.
- The effectiveness of intrauterine contraception (coils) and the injection are not changed by lamotrigine.
- Lamotrigine levels may increase when taken with POP/implant/injection. The signs of too much lamotrigine are: dizziness, double vision, problems with balance and/or co-ordination. However, this is very rare. You should contact your doctor if you experience any of these when taking hormonal contraception.

- Stopping the POP/implant/injection may lower the levels of lamotrigine in your body. This could put you at higher risk of seizure or mood changes. You may want to speak to your neurology or psychiatric team about this prior to stopping contraception.
- The progesterone only coil (LNG-IUD) does not interact with lamotrigine and is safe to use.

Copper intrauterine devices (Cu-IUDs)

This does not interact with lamotrigine and is safe to use.

Please speak to your contraceptive provider about this information if you have any questions or concerns.

Further information

If you have any questions or concern about lamotrigine and your contraception, please contact Dr Jane Bush, Devon Sexual Health Exeter at jane.bush@nhs.net or visit our website at www.devonsexualhealth.nhs.uk

References

<https://www.fsrh.org/documents/ceu-clinical-guidance-drug-interactions-with-hormonal/>

PALS

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) ensures that the NHS listens to patients, relatives, carers and friends, answers questions and resolves concerns as quickly as possible. If you have a query or concern, please contact:

PALS Mid Devon, East Devon and Exeter

- call 01392 402093 or email rduh.pals-eastern@nhs.net. You can also visit the PALS and Information Centre in person at the Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital in Wonford, Exeter.

PALS North Devon

- call 01271 314090 or email rduh.pals-northern@nhs.net. You can also visit the PALS and Information Centre in person at the North Devon District Hospital in Barnstaple.

PALS Torbay and South Devon

- email tsdft.feedback@nhs.net. You can also visit the PALS Office in person at the Torbay Hospital in Torquay or call 01803 655838.

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