

PHENOBARB Tablets

Consumer Medicine Information (CMI) summary

The [full CMI](#) on the next page has more details. If you are worried about using this medicine, speak to your doctor or pharmacist.

1. Why am I using Phenobarb?

Phenobarb contains the active ingredient Phenobarbital. Phenobarb is used for epileptic fits and sedation.

For more information, see Section [1. Why am I using Phenobarb?](#) in the full CMI.

2. What should I know before I use Phenobarb?

Do not use if you have ever had an allergic reaction to Phenobarbital or any of the ingredients listed at the end of the CMI, or if you have had unusual/unexpected sensitivity reactions to any barbiturate medicines.

Talk to your doctor or pharmacist if you have any other medical conditions, take any other medicines, or are pregnant or plan to become pregnant or are breastfeeding.

For more information, see Section [2. What should I know before I use Phenobarb?](#) in the full CMI.

3. What if I am taking other medicines?

Some medicines may interfere with Phenobarb and affect how it works.

A list of these medicines is in Section [3. What if I am taking other medicines?](#) in the full CMI.

4. How do I use Phenobarb?

- Take your medicine as directed by your doctor.

More instructions can be found in Section [4. How do I use Phenobarb?](#) in the full CMI.

5. What should I know while using Phenobarb?

Things you should do	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Remind any doctor, dentist or pharmacist you visit that you are using Phenobarb, especially if you need any medical tests as it may affect the results of some tests.• Tell your doctor if you become pregnant while you are taking this medicine. Women of childbearing potential should use highly effective contraception during treatment with phenobarbital and for 2 months after stopping treatment.
Things you should not do	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Do not take any other medicines while you are taking Phenobarb tablets without first telling your doctor.• Do not stop taking this medicine without talking to your doctor first.
Driving or using machines	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Do not drive or operate machinery until you know how this medicine affects you.
Drinking alcohol	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Be careful drinking alcohol while taking Phenobarb tablets. Your doctor may suggest that you avoid alcohol completely or reduce the amount of alcohol you drink while you are taking Phenobarb tablets.
Looking after your medicine	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Keep this medicine in a cool dry place, protected from light where the temperature stays below 25°C.

For more information, see Section [5. What should I know while using Phenobarb?](#) in the full CMI.

6. Are there any side effects?

Tell your doctor or pharmacist as soon as possible if you do not feel well while you are taking Phenobarb tablets.

For more information, including what to do if you have any side effects, see Section [6. Are there any side effects?](#) in the full CMI.

PHENOBARB Tablets

Active ingredient(s): *Phenobarbital*

Consumer Medicine Information (CMI)

This leaflet provides important information about using Phenobarb. **You should also speak to your doctor or pharmacist if you would like further information or if you have any concerns or questions about using Phenobarb.**

Where to find information in this leaflet:

- [1. Why am I using Phenobarb?](#)
- [2. What should I know before I use Phenobarb?](#)
- [3. What if I am taking other medicines?](#)
- [4. How do I use Phenobarb?](#)
- [5. What should I know while using Phenobarb?](#)
- [6. Are there any side effects?](#)
- [7. Product details](#)

1. Why am I using Phenobarb?

Phenobarb contains the active ingredient Phenobarbital, which belongs to a group of medicines called barbiturates. Barbiturates act by inducing sleep and stopping convulsions.

Phenobarb is used for:

- **epileptic fits**
- **sedation.**

Ask your doctor if you have any questions about why Phenobarb tablets have been prescribed for you. Your doctor may have prescribed it for another purpose.

It is available only with a doctor's prescription.

The use of barbiturates may lead to dependence on the medicine.

2. What should I know before I use Phenobarb?

Warnings

Do not use Phenobarb if:

- you are allergic to Phenobarbital, other barbiturates or any of the ingredients listed at the end of this leaflet.
Always check the ingredients to make sure you can use this medicine.

Some of the symptoms of an allergic reaction may include red, itchy skin rashes, difficulty breathing, hayfever, swelling of the face or throat or faintness.

- you have had unusual/unexpected sensitivity reactions to any barbiturate medicines.

Do not use Phenobarb if you have or have had any of the following medical conditions:

- porphyria, a rare blood pigment disorder
- anaemia, a disease of the blood with reduced number of red blood cells
- severe breathing difficulties
- uncontrolled severe asthma
- uncontrolled diabetes mellitus or sugar diabetes
- alcoholism or drug dependence
- sleep apnoea
- severe liver or kidney problems
- severe depression or suicidal tendencies
- acute or chronic pain.

Phenobarb tablets should not be given to unusually overactive children.

Check with your doctor if you:

- are allergic to any other medicines or any other substances, such as foods, preservatives or dyes
- are young, debilitated or senile
- have any other medical or health problems including:
 - high/low blood pressure
 - heart problems
 - lung problems
 - hyperthyroidism (an overactive thyroid gland)
 - hypoadrenalism (borderline), an underfunctioning adrenal gland
 - a depressive illness
 - asthma
 - a heavy drinker or have a history of alcoholism
 - a drug dependency
 - have severe or long-term pain.

During treatment, you may be at risk of developing certain side effects. It is important you understand these risks and how to monitor for them. See additional information under Section [6. Are there any side effects?](#)

Pregnancy and breastfeeding

Tell your doctor if you are pregnant or intend to become pregnant.

Phenobarb tablets may harm your developing baby if you take it during pregnancy. However, it is very important to control your fits while you are pregnant. Phenobarbital should not be used during pregnancy unless the potential benefit is judged to outweigh the risks following consideration of other suitable treatment options.

Women of childbearing potential should discuss contraceptive options with their doctor. Highly effective contraception should be used during treatment with phenobarbital and for 2 months after stopping treatment. Taking phenobarbital may result in a failure of the therapeutic effect of oral contraceptive drugs. At least one

highly effective method of contraception (such as an intra-uterine device) or two complementary forms of contraception including a barrier method should be used.

If you become pregnant while taking Phenobarb, call your doctor.

Tell your doctor if you are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed.

Breastfeeding is not recommended while taking this medicine as it passes into breast milk and may cause serious side effects to your baby.

Use in the elderly

Elderly patients are more likely to have less effective kidney or liver function due to age. This may increase the risk of side effects.

If you have not told your doctor about any of the above, tell them before you take any Phenobarb tablets.

3. What if I am taking other medicines?

Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you are taking any other medicines, including any medicines, vitamins or supplements that you buy without a prescription from your pharmacy, supermarket or health food shop.

Some medicines may interfere with Phenobarb tablets. These include:

- other medications used to treat epilepsy
- anticoagulant medicines used to treat clots, e.g. warfarin
- painkillers, paracetamol and stronger narcotic agents
- antidepressants, medicines used to treat depression
- anti-arrhythmics, medicines used to treat irregular heartbeats e.g. quinidine, disopyramide
- antibiotics antifungal and antiviral agents, medicines used to treat infections including AIDS
- calcium channel blockers, medicines used to treat high blood pressure and angina
- antipsychotics, medicines used to treat certain mental and emotional conditions
- chemotherapy drugs, used to treat cancer
- corticosteroids, such as prednisolone, cortisone
- medicines used to treat heart failure e.g. digoxin
- oral contraceptives
- folic acid, folinic acid, pyridoxine (Vitamin B6) or Vitamin D
- immunosuppressive medicines, used to lower your body's resistance to disease e.g. ciclosporin, tacrolimus
- medicines used to stop you from feeling pain, e.g. anaesthetic agents
- disulfiram, a medicine used to treat alcoholism
- diuretics
- thyroid replacement therapy medications, e.g. levothyroxine
- urinary alkalinisers
- antihistamines, medicines used to prevent or relieve symptoms of allergy

- theophylline, medicine used to treat asthma
- beta-blockers e.g. propranolol, used to treat high blood pressure and heart conditions.
- Hormone antagonist e.g. Gestrinone

The above medicines may reduce the effectiveness of Phenobarb tablets, reduce their own effectiveness and/or react with it resulting in untoward or sometimes dangerous side effects.

Your doctor or pharmacist has more information on medicines to be careful with or avoid while taking Phenobarb tablets.

4. How do I use Phenobarb?

How much to take / use

Take your medicine as directed by your doctor.

The usual doses of Phenobarb tablets are:

Adults:

- Sedative dose
1-4 tablets as a single daily dose or as 2 to 3 divided doses per day.
- Anticonvulsant dose
2-8 tablets as a single daily dose or as 2 to 3 divided doses per day.

Children:

- Your doctor will advise you of the correct dose, depending on the weight of your child.

How to take it

Swallow the tablets whole with a glass of water.

How long to take it

Continue taking Phenobarb tablets as long as your doctor recommends to.

Do not stop taking Phenobarb tablets without checking with your doctor. Do not let yourself run out of medicine over the weekend or on holidays.

Stopping this medicine suddenly may cause unwanted effects or make your condition worse. Your doctor will slowly reduce your dose before you can stop taking it completely.

If you forget to take it

Take your dose as soon as you remember, and then go back to taking it as you would normally.

Do not take a double dose to make up for the dose that you missed.

If you are unsure about whether to take your next dose, speak to your doctor or pharmacist.

Do not try to make up for missed doses by taking more than one dose at a time.

This may increase the chance of you getting an unwanted effect.

If you take too much (overdose)

If you think that you have used too much Phenobarb, you may need urgent medical attention.

You should immediately:

- phone the Poisons Information Centre (by calling 13 11 26), or
- contact your doctor, or
- go to the Emergency Department at your nearest hospital.

You should do this even if there are no signs of discomfort or poisoning.

Also report any other medicine or alcohol (including any barbiturates or narcotics) which has been taken.

Symptoms of overdose include weakness, dizziness, lethargy, nausea, vomiting, sweating, underbreathing, impairment of consciousness, collapse of circulation, mental confusion and low blood pressure.

5. What should I know while using Phenobarb?

Things you should do

Take Phenobarb tablets exactly as directed by your doctor.

Tell your doctor if you want to take oral contraceptives while taking Phenobarb tablets.

You may need a higher dose of oral contraceptives than usual to prevent pregnancy, or you may need to consider other forms of contraception.

Tell your doctor if you become pregnant while you are taking Phenobarb tablets.

If you need any medical tests while you are taking Phenobarb tablets, tell your doctor as it may affect the results of some tests.

Always discuss with your doctor any problems or difficulties during or after taking this medicine.

Your doctor may want to take some tests from time to time to help prevent unwanted side effects.

Things you should not do

Do not take any other medicines while you are taking Phenobarb tablets without first telling your doctor.

Do not give this medicine to anyone else, even if their symptoms seem similar to yours.

Driving or using machines

Do not drive or operate machinery until you know how this medicine affects you.

Phenobarb may cause dizziness in some people and therefore may affect alertness.

Some people may experience side effects such as nausea, vomiting, constipation, drowsiness and dizziness which may further affect the risk when driving or using dangerous machinery.

Drinking alcohol

Be careful drinking alcohol while taking Phenobarb tablets.

If you drink alcohol, it could make some of the unwanted side effects of this medicine worse.

Your doctor may suggest that you avoid alcohol completely or reduce the amount of alcohol you drink while you are taking Phenobarb tablets.

Storage

Keep it where children cannot reach it.

A locked cupboard at least one-and-a-half metres above the ground is a good place to store medicines.

Keep this medicine in a cool dry place, protected from light where the temperature stays below 25°C.

Do not store it or any other medicines in a bathroom or near a sink. Do not leave it in the car or on window sills.

Heat and dampness can destroy some medicines.

Disposal

If your doctor tells you to stop taking this medication or it has passed its expiry date, ask your pharmacist what to do with any tablets that are left over.

Do not take this medicine after the expiry date (EXP.) printed on the pack.

Do not take it if the packaging shows signs of tampering or the tablets do not look quite right.

6. Are there any side effects?

All medicines can have side effects. If you do experience any side effects, most of them are minor and temporary. However, some side effects may need medical attention.

See the information below and, if you need to, ask your doctor or pharmacist if you have any further questions.

Less serious side effects

Less serious side effects	What to do
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• rapid heartbeat• nausea (feeling sick), vomiting• upper abdominal discomfort• constipation• dizziness• lethargy• skin rashes• sweating• dry mouth• swelling of the gums• confusion or confusion in the elderly• unusual excitement• depression• memory impairment• hallucinations• faintness• irritability	Speak to your doctor or pharmacist if you have any of these less serious side effects and they worry you.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • restlessness • dependency (habit-forming) • mood changes • drowsiness/tiredness • hyperexcitability • jerky movements, jerky eye movements • hangover effects • headache • sleep disturbances • reduced libido, impotence • general joint pain 	
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Therapeutic Goods Administration online at www.tga.gov.au/reporting-problems. By reporting side effects, you can help provide more information on the safety of this medicine.

7. Product details

This medicine is only available with a doctor's prescription. The use of barbiturates may lead to dependence on this medicine.

What Phenobarb contains

Active ingredient (main ingredient)	Each Phenobarb tablet contains 30 mg Phenobarbital.
Other ingredients (inactive ingredients)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lactose monohydrate • acacia • wheat starch • magnesium stearate
Potential allergens	Phenobarb tablets contain gluten and lactose monohydrate.

Serious side effects

Serious side effects	What to do
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • signs of infection, e.g. sore throat, fever, chills, swollen glands, mouth ulcers • easy or unusual bleeding or bruising under the skin • nosebleed • yellowing of the skin and eyes, dark urine (jaundice) • changes in urination, such as increased frequency or blood in urine; swelling in the legs and ankles • sudden signs of allergy, e.g. severe skin rash (Steven-Johnson syndrome, toxic epidermal necrolysis), itching, hives, blisters or peeling skin • signs of intolerance reactions (fever, lymph node swelling, increased sensitivity to light) • harming yourself or having suicidal thoughts • signs of shock (pale, cold, and clammy skin, a rapid and weak pulse, fast and shallow breathing, dizziness, anxiety, and confusion) 	<p>Call your doctor straight away, or go straight to the Emergency Department at your nearest hospital if you notice any of these serious side effects.</p>

Do not take this medicine if you are allergic to any of these ingredients.

Phenobarb tablets do not contain sucrose, tartrazine or any other azo dyes.

What Phenobarb looks like

Phenobarb tablets are uncoated, white, round and scored. Available in bottles of 200 tablets. (Aust R 19758).

Who distributes Phenobarb

Arrotex Pharmaceuticals Pty Ltd
 15–17 Chapel Street
 Cremorne VIC 3121
 Australia
www.arrotex.com.au

This leaflet was prepared in October 2025.

Tell your doctor immediately or go to the Accident and Emergency department of your nearest hospital if you have any thoughts of harming yourself or committing suicide.

Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you notice anything else that may be making you feel unwell.

Other side effects not listed here may occur in some people.

Do not be alarmed by this list of possible side effects.

You may not experience any of them.

Reporting side effects

After you have received medical advice for any side effects you experience, you can report side effects to the