

Pain (nerve type): medication options

Use this **Option Grid™** decision aid to help you and your healthcare professional decide which tablets you may want to consider for the management of all nerve type pain, such as stabbing, shooting, or burning pain, except for patients with diabetic neuropathy or trigeminal neuralgia. This medication information applies to the United Kingdom only.

Consider carbamazepine for trigeminal neuralgia and duloxetine for diabetic neuropathy.

Frequently Asked Questions ↓	Amitriptyline	Gabapentin	Pregabalin	Capsaicin cream
When are they used?	For nerve type pain	For nerve type pain	For nerve type pain	Cream used for nerve type pain if tablets not useful
How do they work?	Reduces sensitivity of nerves	Reduces sensitivity of nerves	Reduces sensitivity of nerves	Reduces sensitivity of nerves in the skin
How effective are they?	30 in every 100 people (30%) have a reduction in pain by half or more	12 in every 100 people (12%) have a reduction in pain by half or more	12 in every 100 people (12%) have a reduction in pain by half or more	10 in every 100 people (10%) have a reduction in pain by half or more. May provide benefit for people who cannot tolerate tablets
What are the most common side effects?	Some people experience dizziness, dry mouth and weight gain. This may lessen with time.	Some people experience nausea and dizziness. This may lessen with time. Increased risk if taken with alcohol, opioids and antidepressants.	Some people experience constipation and dizziness. This may lessen with time. Increased risk if taken with alcohol, opioids and antidepressants.	Some people experience a burning sensation of the skin in the first few applications of the cream.
Are they safe for me to take?	Caution if you have heart problems or are on certain antidepressants.	Caution if you are depressed as gabapentin may lower your mood further. Take lower doses if you have kidney problems.	Caution if you are depressed as pregabalin may lower your mood further. Take lower doses if you have kidney problems.	Avoid applying to open skin.
What dose should I take?	10 mg at night Increase by 10 mg per week (that is, 10 mg across the whole week) Max: 50-80 mg	Week 1: 300 mg once a day Week 2: 300 mg twice a day Week 3: 300 mg three times a day Max: 600 mg three times a day	Start with 75 mg twice a day If required increase further after discussing with GP Max: 300 mg twice a day	0.075% three to four times a day Or 0.025% if the high dose is not tolerated Apply sparingly using gloves

Editors: Kirti Leitch, Suzanne Carty, Alf Collins, Helen Spry, Shaun Green, Richard Burgess, Glyn Elwyn

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