



## **Jeff Donovan MD PhD FRCPC**

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### **What is GABAPENTIN?**

- This is a medication which blocks nerves and can reduce itching, pain, burning
- It is also a type of anti-seizure medication.
- Most common side effects are dizziness, drowsiness and lower extremity swelling

### **How is GABAPENTIN prescribed?**

*Please use as follows:* \_\_\_\_\_

- The medicine is available as 300 mg tablets (although rarely 100 mg tabs are used 3 times daily).
- Use 300 mg at night for three nights then 300 mg twice daily (morning and night) for 3 more days and then 300 mg three times per day for next 8 days. Then starting week 3, go up to 600 mg twice daily and then in week 4 go up to 600 mg three times per day (1800 mg per day total)
  - MAXIMUM dose is 3600 mg/ day (or 1200 mg 3 times/ day).
- DO NOT STOP GABAPENTIN SUDDENLY. It needs to be decreased slowly.

### **What conditions will GABAPENTIN be used for?**

- Itching, Pain, Pain after shingles, Seizure disorders, Burning

### **Who will not be prescribed GABAPENTIN?**

- 1. Someone with allergy to the drug 2. Women trying to become pregnant

### **What are the side effects of GABAPENTIN?**

- SUICIDAL THOUGHTS and BEHAVIOURS are rare but will be discussed.
- dizziness, sleepiness, swelling in legs
- nausea (take with food), dry mouth, diarrhea or constipation
- increased blood pressure, headaches, changes in appetite.

### **Is any blood work needed while taking GABAPENTIN? Not usually**



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