

Patient Name: _____ Date: _____
 Doctor Name: _____ Emergency Number: _____
 Pharmacy: _____ Number: _____

What is Rufinamide?

This is a medicine that has been approved by the Food and Drug Administration to treat absence seizures and drop attacks, also known as atonic seizures, associated with Lennox-Gastaut Syndrome. The drug has been approved for use in adults and children over the age of two years. There are no other indications for the use of this medication.

Important questions to ask your doctor:

- Why am I being given this medicine? _____
- What amount should I be taking? _____

What does this drug look like and how should I take it?



Frequently Asked Questions:

What is Rufinamide? Banzel is the brand name for the seizure medicine rufinamide. Banzel is used as an add-on treatment to control seizures associated with Lennox-Gastaut Syndrome which is a severe form of epilepsy. This medication is taken orally and is available in 200 and 400 mg film-coated tablets.

How do I take Banzel?

- Take this medication exactly as it is prescribed for you. Usually Banzel is taken two times a day.
- People are usually started on a low dose of Banzel and then the amount is gradually increased. If needed, the tablets can be broken in half or crushed to get the exact dose prescribed. Do not take the medication in larger amounts or longer than recommended by your doctor.
- Banzel is absorbed better when taken with food, so try to take it after a meal.
- Try to take the medication in the same manner and at the same time every day. Do not change your dose or schedule of the medication without your doctor's advice.
- Call your doctor if you are not sure about your dose or when to take the medicine.

Are there some people who should not be taking Banzel? Rufinamide is not for people who have a specific syndrome involving their heart called the familial short QT syndrome. This is a rare disease that runs in families and is associated with an abnormal heart rhythm. If you or your family member has a heart rhythm problem, talk to your doctor before taking Banzel so that your doctor can check your heart rhythm with an electrocardiogram (EKG).

What if I miss a dose? Take the missed doses as soon as possible; however, if it is almost time for the next dose, skip the missed dose and continue your regular dosing schedule. Do not take an extra dose unless prescribed from your doctor.

What side effects may occur? Potential side effects include:

- Drowsiness
- Vomiting
- Headache
- Fatigue
- Loss of appetite
- Dizziness
- Irritability
- Attention difficulty
- Itchiness
- Stomach pain

What if I experience side effects? Various side effects may occur while taking this medicine. Call your doctor if you have any questions concerning your possible side effects; however, do not stop taking your medicine without advice from your doctor. They will discuss and recommend potential options. At times it is necessary to continue taking your medications despite these side effects. There are other side effects that may be serious and indicate your body is not tolerating the drug properly. Call a doctor right away if these side effects become severe or cause considerable problems in your daily functions. If you experience a change in seizures, severe rash, allergic reaction or thoughts about dying, contact your doctor immediately as they may indicate potentially serious or life threatening problems.

How can I remember to take my medication? Take medicines at the same time each day. Take it the same time as some other routine such as brushing teeth, after meals or bedtime.

- Use a pill box so you can check if you have taken the dose.
- Use an alarm to remind you of times to take a dose.
- Use a written schedule or chart of when to take the medicine.
- Talk to your doctor or healthcare provider about problems remembering the medicine.

How long will it take for the medicine to work for me? It may take a number of weeks or months to find the right dose and then more time may be needed to know how well the medicine works to control your seizures. How long this takes will be different for each person. It may depend on how often you have seizures, what other medicine you may be taking and how your body responds to the drug.

Should I write down how the medicine is affecting me? It is important to write down how you feel when you are taking this medicine. Also keep track of changes and how much medicine is prescribed, side effects and changes in seizures. Take the information to all followup visits with your healthcare provider.

How should I store my medicine? Keep this medicine in its original container, tightly closed and out of reach of children. Store your prescription at room temperature, away from excess heat and moisture (i.e. not the bathroom). Throw away any medication that is outdated or no longer needed. Talk to your pharmacist about the proper disposal of your medication.

Will this medicine affect other medicines that I am taking? This medication can affect other seizure medicines that you may be taking. Make sure to talk to your doctor about all medicines you are taking. Please see drug interactions for this medication.

How can I manage my side effects? To help lessen upset stomach, take the medicine with a snack or meal. To help lessen dizziness, take the evening dose before bedtime. Some side effects improve over time. If a side effect is difficult to manage or doesn't go away, talk to your doctor.

When should I contact my doctor? Call your doctor right away if any side effects are severe or cause problems in your ability to function or if you have any of the following problems while taking the medicine:

- Worsening or longer lasting seizures
- Thoughts about suicide or dying
- Attempt to commit suicide
- New or worse depression
- New or worse anxiety
- Feeling agitated
- Panic attacks
- Irritability that is new or worse
- Acting aggressive
- Acting on dangerous impulses
- Other unusual changes in behavior and mood
- Severe fever or chilling

Can I drink alcohol while on this medication? People taking this medicine should not drink alcohol because Banzel may increase the effects of alcohol.

Can the seizure medicine affect bone health? Some seizure medicines may cause thinning of the bones. While Banzel is not known to cause this problem, all people taking seizure medication should take calcium and vitamin D supplements each day. Regular exercise and a healthy diet are also very important. People who have thinning of the bones may also need prescription medicine to treat this. Talk to your doctor about how to check the health of your bones and what to do next.

May I drive while taking rufinamide? Use caution when driving, operating machinery or performing other hazardous activities. This medicine may cause dizziness and drowsiness. If you have any problems or are having seizures, avoid these activities and talk to your doctor.

Just for Women:

Is this medicine safe to take during pregnancy? Women taking birth control pills should discuss contraception with a physician before take rufinamide. Safety in pregnancy has not been well established with this drug. Women who are taking this medicine who wish to become pregnant should discuss treatment options with their doctor before the pregnancy begins. Rufinamide is likely to be excreted in breast milk. Breast feeding mothers should talk to a doctor before taking this medication.

Will this medicine affect my menstrual cycle? This medicine should not affect the menstrual cycle. If your cycle becomes irregular, call your doctor.

More Questions?

For more detailed information about Rufinamide and Banzel and seizures, please visit www.epilepsy.com and click on Treatment >> Seizure Medicines (www.epilepsy.com/epilepsy/seizure_medicines.html)