

Valproate Checklist

A number of items should be considered by the neurologist and/or discussed with the patient (and/or their legal guardian) before prescribing valproate for epilepsy and at annual follow-up.

Items for consideration by neurologist

Item	Considered (✓)
Is the diagnosis definitely generalised epilepsy?	
Have alternatives to VPA been tried and found unsuitable?	
Would it be appropriate to try another alternative to VPA?	
Would it be appropriate to try combination therapy with low dose VPA?	
Risks of VPA at this dose	
Should the dose of VPA be reduced?	
Folic acid prescribed	
Pregnancy test	

Items for discussion with patient and/or their representative

Item	Discussed (✓)
Risks of VPA	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organ and limb abnormalities (dose-dependent) • Reduced intelligence (dose-dependent) • Autism spectrum disorder 	
Risks/consequences of uncontrolled maternal epilepsy	
To mother	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trauma, burns, drowning • Status epilepticus • SUDEP • Inability to drive 	
To baby	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Miscarriage • Reduced birth weight • Trauma in neonatal period 	
Importance of contraception	
Recommended methods of contraception	
Consultation with gynaecologist	
Use of folic acid	
What to do if accidentally pregnant	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risks of sudden cessation of medicines • Timing of adverse effects of VPA • Urgent consultation with GP and/or neurologist 	
What to do if pregnancy planned before next scheduled visit	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult neurologist before ceasing contraception 	
Annual follow-up with neurologist	

