

Gabril (tiagabine)

Gabril is a medication for seizures which has also been studied for anxiety and sleep. There is a small amount of evidence that it can help anxiety, reduce nightmares, deepen sleep quality, and help people during withdrawal from alcohol or benzodiazepines. It works through the GABA system in the brain, which is involved in the mechanism of many common treatments for anxiety including neurontin, lyrica and benzodiazepines (e.g. xanax, valium, ativan, klonopin). Unlike the benzodiazepines, gabril is not addictive.

Side Effects

Most common are dizziness, sedation, jitteriness, tremor, and impaired memory/concentration.

Serious warnings

Even though gabril treats seizures, there have been a few reports that Gabril can induce seizures in patients with no history of epilepsy, although this is rare. This risk can be reduced by raising the medicine slowly.

Drug-drug Interactions

Tegretol (carbamazepine) may decrease Gabril levels.

Taking the medication

Gabril can work right away for sleep and may work over 1-4 weeks for anxiety. It is best to take at night. High fat meals decrease rate of absorption. The levels tend to drop in your system after 7-9 hours.

–Updated 7/27/2012 by Chris Aiken, MD