Information on ACAMPROSATE for Service Users and their Families

This leaflet provides general information about your medication. Manufacturer patient information leaflets are also provided with all medicines. If you require further information, speak to your doctor, pharmacist or nurse.

Acamprosate is also known as Campral EC®

It is available as 333mg tablets.

Acamprosate is pronounced:

*Acam-pro-sate*

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The Mersey Care Medicines Information Service¹ regularly updates this information sheet.

¹ Medicines Information, Pharmacy, Mossley Hill Hospital, Park Avenue, Liverpool L18 8BU
What is Acamprosate for?
Acamprosate is used to help people who drink alcohol in a way that is harmful, or who are dependent on alcohol. Acamprosate in combination with counselling and support will help you not to drink alcohol. It is useful for those who are concerned that strong cravings will cause them to start drinking alcohol again.

How should I take Acamprosate?
Before taking acamprosate tell your doctor if:
- you are allergic (hypersensitive) to acamprosate tablets or any of its ingredients
- you suffer from any other conditions, especially kidney and severe liver problems.
- you take any other medicines, especially water tablets, or any medicines that you may have bought without a prescription,
- you are pregnant (or planning pregnancy) or breastfeeding

Your doctor will decide the right dose of acamprosate for you to take. For those who weigh 60kg or more, the usual dose of acamprosate is two tablets three times a day taken in the morning, afternoon and night with meals. If your weight is less than 60 kg, the usual dose is 2 tablets in the morning, 1 in the afternoon and 1 in the evening with meals. Treatment with acamprosate usually starts after you have been weaned off alcohol (detox). You should not be drinking when taking acamprosate otherwise the treatment will not work well.

Never take more than the prescribed dose of your tablets. If you accidentally take more than the prescribed amount or an overdose of acamprosate contact your doctor or go to the accident and emergency department of your local hospital immediately. Always take the container with you, if possible, even if it is empty.
Ask you doctor, pharmacist or nurse if you are not sure of anything.

Do I need to have blood tests or check?
You will be required to get blood test done regularly, once before the medication is started and usually 3 months thereafter, to make sure you can continue to receive acamprosate safely. Because patients who suffer from alcohol dependence often suffer from depression, your doctor may also check you for symptoms of depression.
Can I stop taking Acamprosate if I feel better?
Do not stop taking the tablets unless told to do so by your doctor. Your doctor will advise you about how long you should carry on taking your medication. Treatment with acamprosate is usually continued for up to a year.

What if I forget to take Acamprosate?
If you forget to take a dose, take the missed dose as soon as possible. Do not double the dose or take extra doses to make up. If it is almost time for the next dose, skip the missed dose and take the next dose at the usual time. If you forget to take your medicine for more than a few days, speak to your doctor before taking any more acamprosate.

When will acamprosate start to work?
Acamprosate can take up to a week to start having an effect.

Can I take other medicines?
Acamprosate can be taken with other medicines. However, always check this with your doctor or pharmacist and follow their advice.

Are there any side effects?
Acamprosate may cause side effects in some people, but they may vary from person to person. Many side effects wear off over time. Known side effects include:
- diarrhoea
- stomach ache, wind
- feeling or being sick
- itchy or spotty rash
- changes in sexual function including lack of interest

Occasionally, more serious side effects can occur. See your doctor as soon as possible if you develop problems which may need urgent attention:
- allergic reaction with itchy skin rash, swelling of the face and throat, wheezing or difficulty breathing
- changes in your mood
- blistering rash

If you are concerned about any other side effects, talk to your doctor, nurse or pharmacist.
If you think a medicine has caused you an unwanted side effect, please report the problem either on a Yellow Card form available from your doctor, nurse or pharmacist OR online at this website [http://yellowcard.mhra.gov.uk/](http://yellowcard.mhra.gov.uk/).

**Can I drive?**
Acamprosate does not affect your ability to drive and use machinery. However, if your condition makes you drowsy and less alert, do not drive. You may commit an offence if you drive when your condition or treatment affects your ability to drive safely. Talk to your doctor or pharmacist or contact DVLA if you are not sure.

**Can I drink alcohol?**
Do not drink alcohol whilst taking acamprosate. Even a small amount of alcohol may cause you to start drinking heavily again.

**Can I get pregnant or breast-feed?**
Medicines can have harmful effects at any time during pregnancy. If you are pregnant, or are planning to get pregnant, you should seek advice from your doctor. You and your doctor or specialist will decide if the potential benefits of treatment outweigh the potential risks to the baby.

Acamprosate passes into breast milk. If you are breast-feeding, you should get your doctor’s advice.

**What alternative treatments are there?**
You may be offered other medication such as naltrexone or disulfiram. However, some treatments may not be suitable for you, depending on your exact circumstances and your doctor will help you to decide the best option.

**IMPORTANT**
Remember to keep medicines where children cannot see or reach them. Never share medicines with others even if their symptoms appear the same as yours.

**NEVER EXCEED THE STATED DOSE OF YOUR MEDICINE**