

What's All the "GABA" 'Bout? Pregabalin and Gabapentin Abuse

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Disclosure

Consultant/Independent Contractor: AxialHealthcare Inc. Advisory Board: Purdue Pharma LP Honoraria: Auburn, Rockpointe

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Learning Objectives

- Review the proposed mechanisms of action (MOA) for gabapentin and pregabalin
- Explain the proposed rationale as to why gabapentin and pregabalin have become drugs of abuse
- Identify signs and symptoms of withdrawal that an addicted or tolerant patient may experience upon abrupt discontinuation of gabapentin or pregabalin
- Discuss updates on changes in pain management given the increase in gabapentin and pregabalin abuse

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Current Situation Rising use of nonopioid medications including gabapentin due to opioid public health crisis	
Opioids and concomitant gabapentin increase risk for overdose	
Reports of gabapentinoid abuse	
Changes in PDMP and scheduling at state level	
FDA issues warning for respiratory depression	
PainWeck. 18tp://www.register-hersids.com/reven/marchin-sello-Mas-das-das-das-das-das-das-das-das-das-d	
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Gabapentin and Pregabalin: Pharmacology and Pharmacokinetics	
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Fact or Alternate Fact? Gabapentin and pregabalin work on GABA.	
Gasaponan and progastalin work on Gristra.	

Structurally	related to GABA and has GABA-mimetic properties
Do not	
Convert	ake or breakdown into GABA GABA _a or GABA _B
Binds to th	e $\alpha 2$ - δ subunit of the voltage-gated calcium channel
Reduces th	e Ca ²⁺ -dependent release of pro-nociceptive neurotransmitters
Decreases	release of glutamate, NE, and substance P
Sah Mic	orkin 1914 et al., Pain. 2007;1332:2373;51. stems F. CNS Drug., 2014;28:641-4466. comordie: 20 Orline Highly News micromedescolutions.com/micromedes/2/librarian. in Psychiatry. 2007 Mar£68(0):485.4

FDA-approved Indications

- Pregabalin
- -Neuropathic pain associated with diabetic peripheral neuropathy (DPN)
- Post-herpetic neuralgia (PHN)
 Adjunctive therapy for adult patients with partial onset seizures
- Fibromyalgia
 Neuropathic pain associated with spinal cord injury
- Gabapentin
- -PHN
- Adjunctive therapy in treatment of partial onset seizures, with and without secondary generalization, in adults and pediatrics \geq 3 years

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Lyrica package insert. New York: Parke-Davis; Dec 2016. Neurontin package insert. New York: Parke-Davis; Sept 2015.

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FDA-approved Indications

- Gabapentin enacarbil
- -Moderate-to-severe restless legs syndrome (RLS)
- -PHN
- ■Gabapentin ER
- -PHN
- Pregabalin CR
- -PHN
- -Neuropathic pain associated with DPN

Horizant package insert. Arbor Pharmaceuticals, Atlanta, GA: LLC: October 2016. Lyrica CR package insert. New York, NY; Pfizer: October 2017. Gralise package insert. Newark, CA; Depomed, Inc: Dec 2012.

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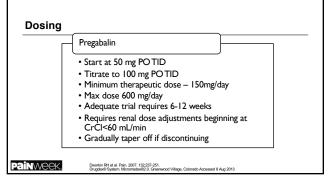
Pregabalin		
Bipolar disorder		
Alcohol/narcotic withdrawal		
• Anxiety		
• ADHD		
Restless legs syndrome		
Trigeminal neuralgia Non-neuropathic pain		
Gabapentin	J	
Insomnia		
Neuropathic pain		
Drug and alcohol addiction		
Anxiety		
Bipolar disorder		

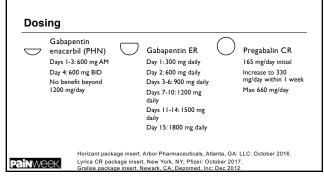
Role in Pain NICE - Gabapentin - 1st line treatment for neuropathic pain ADA Diabetic Peripheral Neuropathy - Consider pregabalin or duloxetine as initial approach AAN Diabetic Peripheral Neuropathy - Offer pregabalin - Consider gabapentin Neuropathic Pain Special Interest Group of International Association for the Study of Pain - Gabapentin, pregabalin first line Addiction: 2015;111:160-1174. Neurology 2016;116:1761-1765. Diabete Care: 2017;60(16-158-1585. Diabete Care: 2017;60(16-1585. Diabete Care: 2017;60(16-158

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Role in Pain Multimodal post-operative pain management -Pain scores -Opioid doses -Opioid doses -Opioid doses -Opioid doses -Opioid doses -Opioid side effects -Controversy around dosing and timing • Acute or chronic sciatica -No benefit for pregabalin • Nonspecific low back pain -Ineffective -Contribute to ADE Pain. 2007. 132 237-951. PLIS Med. 2017.14(8) e1002369. Medicine. 2017.96(2) 1111-1120. Spine. 2013.86(22) 1447-1952. NEJM. 2017.37(2(2) 1111-1120. PATAMENER, 1962. PATAMENER, 1962.

Dosing		
	Gabapentin	1
	Start at gabapentin 300 mg PO QHS Increase by 300 mg PO q3days Minimum therapeutic dose- 1800mg/day Max dose of 3600 mg/day Adequate trial considered 6-8 weeks	
	 Requires renal dose adjustments beginning at CrCl <60ml/min Taper over 1 week if discontinuing 	
Painweek.	Dworkin RH et al. Pain. 2007. 132/237-251. Drugdex® System. Micromedex®2.0. Greenwood Village, Colorado Accessed 8 Aug 2013	•





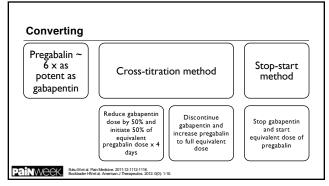
Comparing Pharmacokinetics					
	Gabapentin	Pregabalin			
	F=42-57% Nonlinear pharmacokinetics (PK) Slower onset Lower affinity for receptor	F=83.9-97.7% Linear PK Faster onset Higher affinity for receptor			
Pain week.	Ifaku M et al. Pain Med. 2011;12:1112-1116. O'Comror AB ET AL. AM J Med. 2009;112(10A):S22-S32. Mouin DE et al. Pain Res emanage. 2007;12(1):13-21. Neurontin® package insert. New York, NY: Pitzer:2013. Jun. 14/16/20 metacen insert. New York, NY: Pitzer:2013. Jun.	ve.			

Converting Case

•BT is a 57 yo male with diabetic peripheral neuropathy on gabapentin 600 mg PO TID. He continues to complain of symptoms and says he heard about pregabalin on TV. How would you convert this patient from gabapentin to pregabalin?

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Converting Case	
■ Cross-titration —Decrease gabapentin to 300 mg PO TID + initiate pregabalin at 75 mg PO BID x 4	
days -Discontinue gabapentin + increase pregabalin to 150 mg PO BID	
■Stop-Start —Discontinue gabapentin	
-Initiate pregabalin 150mg PO BID	
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Tapering	
Avoid abrupt discontinuation to limit withdrawal symptoms	
Taper over at least 1 week Taper over at least 1 week	
PainWeek. Lyira padage insert. New York: Parke-Davis; Dec 2016. Neuroriin padage insert. New York: Parke-Davis; Sept 2015.	
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Facus on Cuinidal Idention	-
Focus on Suicidal Ideation Pooled analysis of 199 placebo-controlled trials of 11 different antiepileptic	
drugs (AED) -AED treated n=27,863 patients, Placebo n=16,029 patients	
-OVERALL: 0.43% AED treated patients vs. 0.24% of placebo patients - Relative risk 1.8, 95% Cl: 1.2.2.7	
Nonpsychiatric/pellepsy indications: 0.18% AED patients vs 0.1% placebo Relative risk 1.9 - Nonpsychiatric pellepsy indications: 0.18% AED patients vs 0.1% placebo	
 Presents as early as 1 week Persists for duration of treatment 	
■ Did not vary by age	
Chronic pain associated with suicide Counsel patients	

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Lyrica package insert. New York: Parke-Davis; Dec 2016. Neurontin package insert. New York: Parke-Davis; Sept 2015.

Gabapentin Increases Overdose Odds

- Population-based nested case-control study
- Cases (1,256 cases) were opioid users who died of an opioid-related cause matched with up to 4 controls (4,619 controls)
- Primary exposure was gabapentin use 120 days preceding index date
- ■12.3% of cases and 6.8% of control were prescribed gabapentin
- Odds increased 49% if prescribed gabapentin + opioid
- High dose gabapentin (1800 mg/day) about 60% increased odds compared to moderate dose
- Very high dose (2,200 mg/day) associated with 2-fold increased odds

PLoS Med. 2017;14(10):e1002396.

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Pregabalin Increases Overdose Odds

- Population-based, nested, case-control study
- Cases (1,417 cases) were opioid users who died of an opioid-related cause matched with up to 4 controls (5097 controls)
- Primary exposure was pregabalin use 120 days preceding index date
- Significantly increased odds of opioid-related death OR 1.68
- High doses was associated with increased odds aOR 2.51
- Low or moderate dose associated with increased odds aOR 1.52

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Ann Intern Med. 2018;169(10):732-734.

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Role in Addiction Treatment

- -Alcohol withdrawal
- -Alcohol relapse prevention (abstinence similar to naltrexone)
- -Benzodiazepine/opioid withdrawal
- -Some evidence to prevent cocaine relapse
- Gabapentin
 - -Evidence in opioid, THC, alcohol addictions
- -Gabapentin suggested in APA AUD Guidelines
 Goal of reducing or abstaining from alcohol
- Prefer topiramate or gabapentin or intolerant or did not respond to naltrexone or acomprosate
 No contraindications

CNS Drugs. 2014;28:491-496.
Practice Guideline for the Pharmacological Treatment of Patients with Alcohol Use Disorder. APA. https://psychiatryonline.org/doi/pdf/10.1176/appi.booles.9781615371999

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Gabapentin and Pregabalin Abuse	
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Patient Case	
Ms. Smith is a 67 yo woman with PMH significant for mood disorder, alcohol	
abuse, and polyneuritis	
Medications: naproxen 550mg PO daily, amitriptyline 100mg PO daily, and apparation thread up to 4000mg PO daily.	
gabapentin titrated up to 4800mg PO daily Began to exhibit fraudulent behavior:	
-Requesting medication without a prescription	
 Exaggerated symptoms Physician consulted and then changed when demands not met 	
■Ran out of medication and could not obtain refill	
PainWeek. Pharmacopsychiatry. 2007 Janv40(1):43-4.	
Familyeon	
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Gabapentinoid Use in U.S. 2002-2015	
■346,177 adults prescribed gabapentin or pregabalin from Medical Expenditure	
Panel Survey •82.6% of patients prescribed gabapentin	
Significant increase in gabapentinoid prescribing during study	
-2002 1.2% prescribed gabapentin or pregabalin -2015 3.9% prescribed gabapentin or pregabalin	
-2015 3.5% prescribed gabaperium or pregabalim ■ Changes in 2008	
-No increase in gabapentin until 2008	
-Pregabalin use plateaued and no increase following	
JAMA Intern Med. 2018;epub2018/01/04.	

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- The European Medicines Agency (EMA) trended the number of pregabalin ADRs reported from 3/2006-7/2015
 - Reports peaked in 2013 (2154 total), decreased in 2014 (1593 total), and totaled 1387 reports as of 7/15/2015
- The EMA received a total of 4301 ADR reports related to gabapentin abuse/dependence issues between 3/2004-7/2015
- Users of gabapentin are more likely to abuse oxycodone, buprenorphine, and benzodiazepines compared with nonusers

CNS Drugs. 2016 Jul;30(7):647-54. Ann Pharmacother. 2016 Mar;50(3):229-33. Am J Psychiatry. 2015 May;172(5):487-8.

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Demographics - 2013

- A study of random UDS samples (N=124) in patients being treated for opioid dependence with agonist therapy (methadone or buprenorphine) significant
- -12.1% of urine samples positive for pregabalin (n=15)
 -11/15 patients admitted to buying pregabalin from heroin addicts or drug dealers
- Query of the German Federal Institute for Drugs and Medical Devices regarding pregabalin abuse/dependence significant for:
 - -55 total reports of pregabalin abuse and dependence -Mean daily dose: 1424mg

 - -Mean age: 36 yo
 - -63.6% of reports were male patients

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Demographics - 2015/2016

- From 3/2004-7/2015 4301 ADR reports related to gabapentin
- From 3/2006-7/2015 7639 ADR reports related to pregabalin
- -1.13:1 female to male ratio
- Common to have history of substance use disorder

Annals Pharmacother. 2016;50(3):229-233. CNS Drugs. 2016;30:647-654.

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Demographics – Prison System	
 Search of inmate lockers revealed only 19/96 inmates in possession of gabapentin were prescribed gabapentin 	
Diverting gabapentin for high	-
Pain Week. Drugs. 2017.77.403.428.	
31	
Prevalence	
Lifetime prevalence in general population estimated at 1.1% of patients	
 Prevalent in opioid abuse populations -15-22% gabapentin misuse 	
 -40-65% abuse of gabapentin with prescription > 50% of patients with history of substance use disorder 	
-Opioid use disorder common	
Pain Week Addiction. 2018;111:1160-1174.	
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Retrospective Cohort Analysis from Insurance Claims	
Database	
 Inclusion: Patients 16-64 years old and had ≥2 pharmacy claims for alprazolam, gabapentin, pregabalin, zolpidem, or any opioid medication (ex. 	
patch formulations or fentanyl products) ■ Potential abuse: ≥3 claims exceeding the daily dose threshold and ≥3 rolling	
quarters where the dispensed supply exceeded the threshold Results:	
2.20/ and 4.00/ of nationto were notentially obvious apparent in a proceeding clans	

PathWeek. Psychiatr Q. 2016;87(4):763-767.

-24% of gabapentin patients on opioids and 28% of pregabalin patients on opioids meeting criteria for potential abuse

FDA Adverse Events Reporting System (FAERS)

- Post-marketing surveillance
- October 2012 December 2016 total 4,935,048 events for 294,652 unique medications
- ■*Coingestants not known

Event	Gabapentin	Pregabalin
Total ADE	10,038	571
Abuse-related	576	58
Abuse-related fatalities*	106	24

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Res Soc Adm Pharm. 2019;15:953-958.

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Mechanism of Action: Abuse

- Reduces the release of neurotransmitters, including:
- -Glutamate
- -Noradrenaline
- -Serotonin
- -Dopamine
- GABA analogues which may induce addictive behaviors in the same manner as benzodiazepines
- Pregabalin:
- -Schedule V
- –Six-fold higher binding affinity for the $\alpha_2\text{-}\delta$ subunit
- -Quicker absorption rate and greater bioavailability

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Eur J Clin Pharmacol. 2013 Jun;69(6):1335-42.

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Pregabalin Package Insert

- In a small patient population (N=15) of recreational users of sedative/hypnotic drugs, pregabalin administered as a 450mg single dose produced the following results:
- "Good drug effect" "High"
- "Liking"
- The above effects were similar to that reported with a 30mg single dose of
- In addition, controlled trials of >5500 patients found that 4% of patients treated with pregabalin reported euphoria as an ADR
 - -Reported rates range from 1-12%

- Small number of post-marketing reports of misuse and abuse
- Taking higher than recommended doses
- Unapproved uses or to treat withdrawal
- History of polysubstance abuse
- Assess history of drug abuse
- Monitor for s/sx of gabapentin misuse or abuse

Neurontin package insert. Pfizer; New York, NY: October 2017

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Doses for Abuse

- Abused in a wide variety of doses

 —Therapeutic range no prescription

 - -Supratherapeutic range
- ■3-20 times clinically used amounts
- ■Taken as one large dose
- Tolerance develops leading to dose increase

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Addiction. 2016;111;1160-1174 CNS Drugs. 2014;28:491-496. Drugs. 2017;77:403-426.

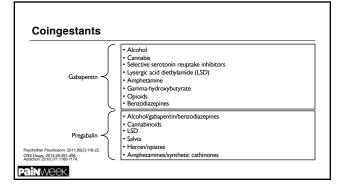
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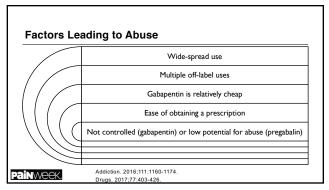
Frequency of Abuse

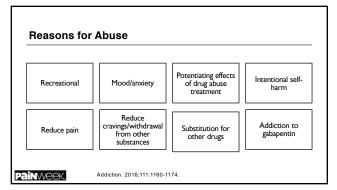
- General population
 - -More than once weekly 13.1%
- -Once weekly once monthly 50%
- -Less frequently 36.8% Opioid abuse population
- -25 of the last 30 days

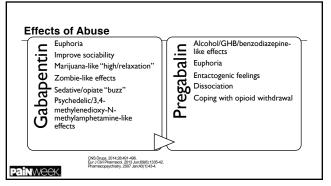
Drugs. 2017;77:403-426.

	providers (52-63%)	
-	equaintances (57.8%)	
Internet (47		
Drug dealer		
Internationa	I (7.8%)	









Effecte	٥f	Gabapentir	٠.	Drogahalin	Ahuee
Ellects	OI	Gabapeniii	ıα	Pregabalin	Abuse

- "...the pregabalin erases my benzo, opiate withdrawal and cravings... In my opinion, anything over 900mg is a waste too sedating"
- "The only downside to gabapentin so far as I can tell, is the onset. These little guys take upwards of an hour to really start to kick in, but luckily they last for 4-8 hours it seems..."
- "I feel as if I'm on a super amphetamine rush and can tackle anything, yet feel so content it's like I'm on a fully sedated opiate buzz."
- "...pregabalin outshines gabapentin. Far less dosage to achieve the same recreational high. Also not as strong of a half life allowing one to use the drug more frequently."

Psychother Psychosom. 2011;80(2):118-22.

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Overdose

- Onset: soon after ingestion
- Duration: 10h
- Effects typically mild to moderate
- Fatalities or intubation rare
- Common effects
- -Hypotension
- -Tachycardia
- Symptoms more likely after gabapentin 1200 mg
- Survivals reported with up to 11,500 mg of pregabalin and 91,000 mg of gabapentin

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Drugs. 2017;77:403-426.

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Overdose

- Severe events more of a concern in renal dysfunction
- Fatalities more common when ingested with other substances
- ■90% of fatalities associated with opioids
- German toxicology reports from 2010-2012 with pregabalin
- -General population 2% of cases year 1, 4% of cases in year 2
- -Known substance use disorder 5.5% in year 1, 29.8% in year 2 Finnish toxicology reports from 2010-2011
- -Pregabalin 2.3%
- -Pregabalin 2.3% -Gabapentin 0.31%

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Drugs. 2017;77:403-426.

W	/ithdrawal	Signs/Syr	mptoms		Can C
	Psychomotor agitation	Confusion	Craving	Disorientation	3
	Arterial HTN	Tachycardia	Tremor	Insomnia	20e
	Nausea	Headache	Diarrhea	Diaphoresis	(A)

Patient Case: Revisited

- •Ms. Smith is a 67 yo woman with PMH significant for mood disorder, alcohol abuse, and polyneuritis
- She was actually taking at least 7200mg of gabapentin daily!
- Upon running out of gabapentin, she developed typical withdrawal symptoms and was hospitalized
- -Upon discharge, gabapentin discontinued
- ---3 months latter, gabapentin re-prescribed
 ---5 months after discharge, she had resumed gabapentin abuse in combination with diazepam

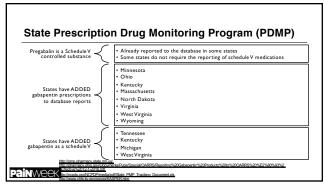
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chiatry. 2007 Jan;40(1):43-4.

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Patient Case: Revisited

- Taper off gabapentin
- ■Behavioral Health referral
- ■Taper BZD



Indicators of medication abuse

- Requesting specific medications
 Requesting higher doses
- Doctor shopping
- Claims of lost/stolen medications
- Using multiple pharmacies
- Early refill requests
 Negative UDM but not routinely part of testing

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Addiction. 2017;77:403-426.

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Summary

- Gabapentin and pregabalin abuse can occur
- -Common and novel routes of administration
- -Therapeutic and supratherapeutic doses
- More common in patients with history of substance use disorder
- Coingestants often involved
- Patients can experience withdrawal if gabapentin and pregabalin are stopped abruptly
- Certain state Prescription Drug Monitoring Programs (PDMPs) are adding gabapentin

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3 Things for Monday	
 Assess a patient's substance abuse history, psychiatric history, and concurrent medications before prescribing 	
Be aware of higher risk groups Monitor for early refills and/or limiting the quantity supplied	
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CNS Drugs. 2014;28:491-496.	
Addiction. 2017; 77:403-426.	
55	
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Assessment Q1	
■The proposed MOA for gabapentin and pregabalin	
include	
a) Binding to GABA receptors	
 b) Increasing glutamate, norepinephrine, and substance P 	
c) Binding to the $\alpha 2\text{-}\delta$ subunit of the voltage-gated	
calcium channel d) Inhibiting serotonin reuptake	
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Assessment Q2	
•Factors that have contributed to the abuse of	
gabapentin include all of the following EXCEPT:	
a) High cost	
b) Ease of obtaining a prescriptionc) Non-controlled substance status	

d) Multiple uses/indications

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Δος	acer	nan	t M3

- Signs of gabapentin and pregabalin withdrawal include all of the following EXCEPT:
 - a) Cravings
 - b) Hypotension
 - c) Insomnia
 - d) Headache

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What's All the "GABA" 'Bout? Pregabalin and Gabapentin Abuse

Timothy J Atkinson, PharmD, BCPS, CPE