

Table 1 Drug options by seizure type

Seizure type	First-line drugs	Second-line drugs	Other drugs that may be considered	Drugs to be avoided (may worsen seizures)
Generalised tonic-clonic	Carbamazepine <sup>a</sup> Lamotrigine <sup>b</sup> Sodium valproate Topiramate <sup>a,b</sup>	Clobazam Levetiracetam Oxcarbazepine <sup>a</sup>	Acetazolamide Clonazepam Phenobarbital <sup>a</sup> Phenytoin <sup>a</sup> Primidone <sup>a,c</sup>	Tiagabine Vigabatrin
Absence	Ethosuximide Lamotrigine <sup>b</sup> Sodium valproate	Clobazam Clonazepam Topiramate <sup>a</sup>		Carbamazepine <sup>a</sup> Gabapentin Oxcarbazepine <sup>a</sup> Tiagabine Vigabatrin
Myoclonic	Sodium valproate	Clobazam Clonazepam Lamotrigine Levetiracetam Piracetam Topiramate <sup>a</sup>		Carbamazepine <sup>a</sup> Gabapentin Oxcarbazepine <sup>a</sup> Tiagabine Vigabatrin
Tonic	Lamotrigine <sup>b</sup> Sodium valproate	Clobazam Clonazepam Levetiracetam Topiramate <sup>a</sup>	Acetazolamide Phenobarbital <sup>a</sup> Phenytoin <sup>a</sup> Primidone <sup>a,c</sup>	Carbamazepine <sup>a</sup> Oxcarbazepine <sup>a</sup>
Atonic	Lamotrigine <sup>b</sup> Sodium valproate	Clobazam Clonazepam Levetiracetam Topiramate <sup>a</sup>	Acetazolamide Phenobarbital <sup>a</sup> Primidone <sup>a,c</sup>	Carbamazepine <sup>a</sup> Oxcarbazepine <sup>a</sup> Phenytoin <sup>a</sup>
Focal with/without secondary generalisation	Carbamazepine <sup>a</sup> Lamotrigine <sup>b</sup> Oxcarbazepine <sup>a,b</sup> Sodium valproate Topiramate <sup>a,b</sup>	Clobazam Gabapentin Levetiracetam Phenytoin <sup>a</sup> Tiagabine	Acetazolamide Clonazepam Phenobarbital <sup>a</sup> Primidone <sup>a,c</sup>	

a Hepatic enzyme-inducing AED.

b Should be used as a first choice under circumstances outlined in the NICE technology appraisal of newer AEDs for adults – see page 7.

c Should rarely be initiated – if a barbiturate is required, phenobarbital is preferred.

Table 3 summarises licensing status in July 2004. For current details on licensing, see the Summary of Product Characteristics for each drug and/or the *British National Formulary*.

Table 2 Drug options by epilepsy syndrome

Epilepsy syndrome	First-line drugs	Second-line drugs	Other drugs	Drugs to be avoided (may worsen seizures)
Childhood absence epilepsy	Ethosuximide Lamotrigine <sup>b</sup> Sodium valproate	Levetiracetam Topiramate <sup>a</sup>		Carbamazepine <sup>a</sup> Oxcarbazepine <sup>a</sup> Phenytoin Tiagabine Vigabatrin
Juvenile absence epilepsy	Lamotrigine <sup>b</sup> Sodium valproate	Levetiracetam Topiramate <sup>a</sup>		Carbamazepine <sup>a</sup> Oxcarbazepine <sup>a</sup> Phenytoin <sup>a</sup> Tiagabine Vigabatrin

Table 2 Drug options by epilepsy syndrome *continued*

<i>Epilepsy syndrome</i>	<i>First-line drugs</i>	<i>Second-line drugs</i>	<i>Other drugs</i>	<i>Drugs to be avoided (may worsen seizures)</i>
Juvenile myoclonic epilepsy	Lamotrigine <sup>b</sup> Sodium valproate	Clobazam Clonazepam Levetiracetam Topiramate <sup>a</sup>	Acetazolamide	Carbamazepine <sup>a</sup> Oxcarbazepine <sup>a</sup> Phenytoin <sup>a</sup> Tiagabine Vigabatrin
Generalised tonic-clonic seizures only	Carbamazepine <sup>a</sup> Lamotrigine <sup>b</sup> Sodium valproate Topiramate <sup>a,b</sup>	Levetiracetam	Acetazolamide Clobazam Clonazepam Oxcarbazepine <sup>a</sup> Phenobarbital <sup>a</sup> Phenytoin <sup>a</sup> Primidone <sup>a,c</sup>	Tiagabine Vigabatrin
Focal epilepsies: cryptogenic, symptomatic	Carbamazepine <sup>a</sup> Lamotrigine <sup>b</sup> Oxcarbazepine <sup>a,b</sup> Sodium valproate Topiramate <sup>a,b</sup>	Clobazam Gabapentin Levetiracetam Phenytoin <sup>a</sup> Tiagabine	Acetazolamide Clonazepam Phenobarbital <sup>a</sup> Primidone <sup>a,c</sup>	
Infantile spasms	Steroids <sup>d</sup> Vigabatrin <sup>b</sup>	Clobazam Clonazepam Sodium valproate Topiramate <sup>a</sup>	Nitrazepam	Carbamazepine <sup>a</sup> Oxcarbazepine <sup>a</sup>
Benign epilepsy with centrotemporal spikes	Carbamazepine <sup>a</sup> Lamotrigine <sup>b</sup> Oxcarbazepine <sup>a,b</sup> Sodium valproate	Levetiracetam Topiramate <sup>a</sup>	Sulthiame <sup>e</sup>	
Benign epilepsy with occipital paroxysms	Carbamazepine <sup>a</sup> Lamotrigine <sup>b</sup> Oxcarbazepine <sup>a,b</sup> Sodium valproate	Levetiracetam Topiramate <sup>a</sup>		
Severe myoclonic epilepsy of infancy	Clobazam Clonazepam Sodium valproate Topiramate <sup>a,b</sup>	Levetiracetam Stiripentol <sup>e</sup>	Phenobarbital <sup>a</sup>	Carbamazepine <sup>a</sup> Lamotrigine Oxcarbazepine <sup>a</sup> Vigabatrin
Continuous spike wave of slow sleep	Clobazam Clonazepam Ethosuximide Lamotrigine <sup>b</sup> Sodium valproate Steroids <sup>d</sup>	Levetiracetam Topiramate <sup>a</sup>		Carbamazepine <sup>a</sup> Oxcarbazepine <sup>a</sup> Vigabatrin
Lennox–Gastaut syndrome	Lamotrigine <sup>b</sup> Sodium valproate Topiramate <sup>a,b</sup>	Clobazam Clonazepam Ethosuximide Levetiracetam	Felbamate <sup>e</sup>	Carbamazepine <sup>a</sup> Oxcarbazepine <sup>a</sup>
Landau–Kleffner syndrome	Lamotrigine <sup>b</sup> Sodium valproate Steroids <sup>d</sup>	Levetiracetam Topiramate <sup>a</sup>	Sulthiame <sup>e</sup>	Carbamazepine <sup>a</sup> Oxcarbazepine <sup>a</sup>
Myoclonic astatic epilepsy	Clobazam Clonazepam Sodium valproate Topiramate <sup>a,b</sup>	Lamotrigine Levetiracetam		Carbamazepine <sup>a</sup> Oxcarbazepine <sup>a</sup>

a Hepatic enzyme-inducing AED.

b Should be used as a first choice under circumstances outlined in the NICE technology appraisal of newer AEDs for adults – see page 7.

c Should rarely be initiated – if a barbiturate is required, phenobarbital is preferred.

d Steroids: prednisolone or ACTH (adrenocorticotrophic hormone).

e Not licensed in the UK, but available by importation.

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