

ConsumerRx[®]

Lyrica[®]

What is Lyrica?

Lyrica is a medication that protects against seizures. It is also heavily marketed to treat nerve pain from diabetes, damage to nerves after herpes infections (shingles) and fibromyalgia. Lyrica works like **gabapentin** (Neurontin[®]), another seizure medication that treats nerve pain and fibromyalgia.

Why is Lyrica a non-preferred medication?

Lyrica is non-preferred because it has never been shown to be better than generic medications for seizure control, treatment of nerve pain or fibromyalgia, but it costs more.

Is Lyrica the only medication used for fibromyalgia?

- No, although not approved by the FDA for the treatment of fibromyalgia, generic **amitriptyline** (Elavil[®]), **cyclobenzaprine** (Flexeril[®]) and **gabapentin** (Neurontin[®]) have been used to treat fibromyalgia for many years.
- The above generic medications have proven track records for safety and effectiveness. They are also recommended for fibromyalgia by national treatment guidelines and are recognized in pharmaceutical compendia (medication references doctors use). (see references below)
- Lyrica and Cymbalta[®] are approved by the Food and Drug Administration for fibromyalgia, but they have not been proven to be safer or more effective than these generic treatments.

How does gabapentin (Neurontin[®]) compare to Lyrica?

Because Lyrica works in the body the same way as gabapentin, the results of treatment should be very similar. For example, in a study funded by the National Institute of Health, **gabapentin** (Neurontin[®]) helped to relieve pain due to fibromyalgia in a similar way to Lyrica. **Gabapentin** (Neurontin[®]) is available for a generic copayment.

What are my medication options for fibromyalgia, nerve pain and seizures?

For fibromyalgia:	
Generic Medications: ~\$5 - 18*	Brand Medications: ~\$140*
amitriptyline (Elavil [®]) cyclobenzaprine (Flexeril [®]) gabapentin (Neurontin [®])	Cymbalta [®] Lyrica [®]
For nerve pain from diabetes or shingles:	
Generic Medications: ~ \$5 - 21*	Brand Medications: ~ 130 - \$260*
amitriptyline (Elavil [®]) desipramine (Norpamin [®]) imipramine (Tofranil [®]) gabapentin (Neurontin [®]) tramadol (Ultram [®])	Cymbalta [®] Lyrica [®] Effexor XR [®] Topamax [®] Keppra [®]
For partial seizures:	
Generic Medications: ~\$12 - 38*	Brand Medications: ~\$130 - \$260*
gabapentin (Neurontin [®]) carbamazepine (Tegretol [®]) phenytoin (Dilantin [®]) valproate (Depakene [®])	Keppra [®] Topamax [®] Lyrica [®] Zonegran [®] Gabitril [®]

Brand names in () are non-formulary and are listed for your reference only. *Approximate cost estimates based on a 30-day supply. Actual prices may vary depending on your pharmacy and the amount or strength of medication dispensed.

When should Lyrica be used?

Lyrica may be an option when generic alternatives have not been successful in managing seizures, nerve pain symptoms or fibromyalgia.

Are there common side effects for Lyrica?

Side effects for Lyrica may include drowsiness, dizziness, weight gain, double or blurred vision and retention of fluid. It can also cause poor coordination. Higher medication doses increase the chance of side effects.

Is Lyrica habit-forming?

Like Valium[®], Lyrica is a controlled substance. Taking Lyrica may be habit-forming and has a potential for misuse similar to Valium because of its euphoric effects.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Talk to your doctor about your medication options. Generic options provide the best value for these conditions. Lyrica can have value when generic medications have not been successful.

Note: Since many medication options are available, our physicians and pharmacists developed this to provide you with information about the available alternatives, as well as potential advantages and lack of advantages of the various products. This medication summary was developed based upon an evaluation of information from the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA), scientific studies, and input from practicing doctors and specialists.

References:

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3. Drug Facts and Comparisons [Internet database]. Indianapolis, IN: Wolters Kluwer Health, Inc. 1946-2008. Updated periodically. Available at: www.online.factsandcomparisons.com
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