

Alameda County Behavioral Health Care Services
Drug Information Sheet: **valproic acid (Depakene) or
divalproex (Depakote)**

Valproic acid is used in the treatment of bipolar disorder or schizoaffective disorder to stabilize moods and reduce overactivity, racing thoughts, pressured speech, agitation and insomnia.

Like any medication, valproic acid or divalproex can cause some side effects, including:

Common

drowsiness
headache
stomach upset
nausea
diarrhea

Less Common

rash
hair loss
weight changes
dizziness

Rare

liver problems
swelling of face or legs
low blood count
pancreas problems

Valproic Acid can be measured in your blood to make sure it is at the right level. Usually, blood levels range from 50-125 mcg/ml.

Your physician will monitor your blood level with you.

Valproic Acid needs to be taken as prescribed, without missing or taking extra doses. Missing or taking extra doses could change your valproic acid blood level.

Because valproic acid can cause birth defects, it is important to tell your physician if you become pregnant, or are considering becoming pregnant.