

# Lamictal (lamotrigine) titration schedule

Why the slow start exists, and the example schedules from FDA labeling. Full guide at [psychiatryrx.org/medications/lamotrigine/](https://psychiatryrx.org/medications/lamotrigine/)

Lamotrigine has to be started at a low dose and increased very slowly over several weeks. The slow increase isn't fussiness. It lowers the risk of a rare but serious skin reaction, and that risk is highest in the first weeks and increased by starting too high or going up too fast. Starter kits exist to walk this schedule week by week.

**These are the example schedules from FDA labeling for bipolar maintenance in adults. Your prescriber may use a different schedule, and theirs is the one to follow. Never adjust the pace on your own.**

## FDA label example schedules (adults, bipolar maintenance)

Weeks	Lamotrigine alone	With valproate (Depakote)	With carbamazepine or other inducers, no valproate
1 and 2	25 mg once a day	25 mg every other day	50 mg once a day
3 and 4	50 mg once a day	25 mg once a day	100 mg a day, in divided doses
5	100 mg once a day	50 mg once a day	200 mg a day, in divided doses
6	200 mg once a day (usual target)	100 mg once a day (usual target)	300 mg a day, in divided doses
7	Continue 200 mg	Continue 100 mg	Up to 400 mg a day, in divided doses (usual target)

Valproate raises lamotrigine levels, so every step is halved. Enzyme-inducing drugs like carbamazepine clear lamotrigine faster, so steps are larger. This is exactly why the schedule depends on your full medication list.

## The rash warning, plainly

Lamotrigine carries an FDA boxed warning about rare but serious skin reactions, including Stevens-Johnson syndrome and toxic epidermal necrolysis. Report any new rash to your prescriber promptly, especially in the first weeks or if it comes with fever or feeling unwell. Most rashes turn out to be benign, but that call belongs to a clinician.

## If you miss doses

- A missed day here and there: ask your prescriber how they want it handled. Never double up.
- Several days in a row missed: this matters with lamotrigine. Restarting at your full dose can raise the rash risk, so the dose may need to be built up slowly again. Call your prescriber before restarting.
- Stopping: don't stop abruptly unless a clinician tells you to. An abrupt stop can affect mood stability and, if restarted later, means titrating again.

### For educational purposes only

The schedules above are the general examples printed in FDA labeling, not a schedule for you. This sheet is general education from PsychiatryRx.org, medically reviewed by a board-certified psychiatrist. It isn't medical advice and it doesn't replace your prescriber, your pharmacist, or the FDA label that comes with your medication. Medication decisions depend on your history, your other medications, and where you live, so always follow your prescriber's instructions over anything printed here. Don't start, stop, or change a medication based on this sheet alone. If you're in crisis in the US, call or text 988.