

EPILEPSY GENERICS WARNING

Epilepsy patients should not be switched to generics as they may increase seizures, US neurologists have warned.

A survey of 69 doctors revealed 50 cases of patients who had breakthrough seizures or more frequent seizures when switched to a generic version of the medication that had previously provided good control of their epilepsy.

Generic versions of phenytoin, valproic acid, carbamazepine and gabapentin were mostly reported in the cases, published in the journal *Neurology*.

Authors of the study which was funded by GSK, said their findings suggested generic bioequivalence standards may not be strict enough for epilepsy drugs that have a narrow margin of safety and efficacy.

Bioequivalence tests conducted on small numbers of healthy patients do not reflect real-life epilepsy management, the researchers claimed.

“We believe that in a seizure-free, fully compliant patient it is prudent for the physician to ensure that the antiepileptic drug preparation does not vary,” they concluded.

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