# DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
## Veterans Health Administration

February 2006

Dear VA Healthcare Provider:

There are currently two FDA formulations of divalproex sodium. Depakote EC® (enteric coated, dosed twice daily) and Depakote ER® [extended release, dosed once daily- NDF name Depakote SA, orderable item is DIVALPROEX 'TAB,SA,24HR (EXTENDED RELEASE)]. Having both of these products listed on the VA National Formulary may lead to confusion and medication errors. The Medical Advisory Panel and VISN Formulary Leaders have discussed this issue and have agreed to list only one agent on the National Formulary. The formulary product will be Depakote ER® (extended release, dosed once daily).

The conversion of divalproex EC to ER has been shown to be safe and effective. Patients should be converted with an increase in dose of 8-20% when going to the ER product. For example, a patient receiving 1000 mg/day of the EC product could convert to 1250 mg of the ER product. Table 1 is the manufacturer's recommended conversion doses. Conversion can be done as a one time change and need not be titrated. Plasma levels should be drawn 24 hours post dose of the ER product as this is the nadir level. Monitoring should be based on the clinical condition of the patient.

**Table 1: Dose Conversion**

| Depakote EC (total daily dose in mg) | Depakote ER (total daily dose in mg) |
|---|---|
| 500-625 | 750 |
| 750-875 | 1000 |
| 1000-1125 | 1250 |
| 1250-1375 | 1500 |
| 1500-1625 | 1750 |
| 1750 | 2000 |
| 1875-2000 | 2250 |
| 2125-2250 | 2500 |
| 2375 | 2750 |
| 2500-2750 | 3000 |
| 2875 | 3250 |
| 3000-3125 | 3500 |

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the use of Depakote ER®, please contact the pharmacy at your facility.

Sincerely,