

## **Foetal Anti-Convulsant Syndromes**

*We are here to support all families impacted by Fetal Anti-Convulsant Syndromes (FACS). Foetal Anti-Convulsant Syndrome is caused when the anti-convulsant medicine a woman takes during pregnancy affects the foetus. It is not yet understood why this affects some children and not others, but it is believed it may be due to a genetic disposition.*

### **Our Vision**

*That no child should ever be born with FACS. OACS Ireland is a voluntary group, we are dedicated to providing support, help and advise other families, whose children have been affected by Fetal Anti-Convulsant Syndrome (FACS) in Ireland*

### **About Anti-Convulsant Drugs (AED'S)**

*It is important to note that Anticonvulsant medications are not only used or prescribed for Epilepsy but also for Bipolar Disorder, Depression, Migraine, Pain Relief and it is also prescribed in treatment for other medical conditions.*

### **Clinical Effects & Key Features, Facial Characteristics, Including Neural tube defects NTDs**

- Spina bifida
- Cleft lip and palate
- Facial and skull
- Limb defects
- Ear malformations
- Skeletal malformation
- Heart, kidney, urinary tract and sexual organ malformations

### **Developmental delay**

*Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASDs)  
Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)*

### **Withdrawal symptoms**

*associated with prenatal Sodium Valproate exposure*

### **Effects on the endocrine system, and sexual identity problems**

*Which occur due to a mismatch between genital development and neural / sexual identity development*

### **Psychomotor issues**

*Symptoms that stem from mental tension and anxiety*

## **Current opinion of Fetal Anti-Convulsant Syndromes**

*Not only one Anti-Convulsant Drug causes Fetal Anti-Convulsant Syndromes,  
But the majority of Anti-Convulsant Drugs (AED's), around 10 of which, includes the newer drugs, that may cause the condition Foetal Anticonvulsant Syndromes in various degrees.*

### **Studies have indicated**

*That Fetal Valproate Syndrome is associated with a greater risk of neurological and cognitive abnormalities than other anti-convulsant medications*

### **Neuropsychological Assessment**

*A neuropsychological assessment will determine if there are learning or behavioral difficulties. Basic genetic tests may be carried out to rule any other non-related medical conditions.*

### **Children diagnosed with FACS**

*Should have a full medical investigation, including heart, kidney scans, along with hearing and vision assessments*



## OACS Ireland

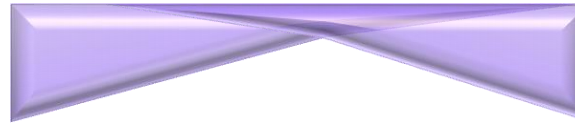
*Our hope is to ensure that people living with FACS along with their families will experience better recognition, improved public health services and support. There is nothing accomplished alone!*

### The Lowest Possible Dose in Pregnancy

*The lowest possible dose of anti-convulsant medication is recommended along with constant monitoring of the amount of the drug (serum concentration)*

### Today it is recognised FACS affects males and females in equal numbers

*Epilim (sodium valproate) effects 30–40% of children with major or minor malformations, including autism with a 55% chance of a mother on Epilim having a second child born with Foetal Valproate Syndrome (FACS).*



## The Epilim Toolkit

*The Epilim toolkit was produced for patients and prescribers to reinforce the safety message that Epilim is not to be prescribed for girls or women of child-bearing age unless other treatments are not effective or are not tolerated.*

### You will find your Epilim Toolkit on the OACS Ireland Website

[www.oacsireland.ie](http://www.oacsireland.ie)

Contact us @

[info.oacsireland@gmail.com](mailto:info.oacsireland@gmail.com)



YouTube

### OACS Charity UK Website

[www.oacscharity.org](http://www.oacscharity.org)

**DO NOT STOP TAKING YOUR  
MEDICATION  
WITHOUT SPEAKING TO YOUR  
DOCTOR**



# O.A.C.S Ireland



**A support group for those affected by Anti-Convulsant Medication in Ireland**

Organisation for Anti-Convulsant Syndromes Ireland

Raising Awareness

Supporting Families

Developing Understanding

Promoting Research