# Nursing Implications for Pharmacology: Mood Stabilizers

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<th>AGENTS/DRUGS</th>
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<td>Lithium</td>
<td>To stabilize mood in Bipolar Disorder; to prevent and treat manic episodes.</td>
<td>Use with caution in elderly, thyroid disease, diabetes. Assess for toxicity. Therapeutic range is 0.5–1.5 mEq/L. Draw levels before A.M. dose. Check lithium (Li) levels weekly initially, then q2 mo. Monitor weight, stable Na intake, fluid and electrolyte balance, mental status. Pregnancy category D.</td>
<td>Dehydration, NSAIDs increase risk of toxicity. High Na intake increases Li excretion; maintain stable (not reduced) Na intake, replace losses due to sweating. Blood tests for Li levels necessary throughout treatment. Know symptoms of toxicity. Contraceptive teaching.</td>
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**Anticonvulsant mood stabilizers:**

- Valproic acid (Depakene)
- Sodium valproate (Depakon)
- Divalproex sodium (Depakote)
- Carbamazepine (Tegretol)
- Lamotrigine (Lamictal)

To prevent and treat manic episodes. Carbamazepine and lamotrigine are used when valproate is not effective.


Avoid alcohol and other CNS depressants. Regular blood tests are necessary to monitor blood cells and liver function. Contraceptive teaching.