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Phenobarbital

National Cancer Institute

Source

National Cancer Institute. *Phenobarbital*. NCI Thesaurus. Code C739.

A long-acting barbituric acid derivative with antipsychotic property. Phenobarbital binds to and activates the gamma-aminobutyric acid (GABA)-A receptor, thereby mimicking the inhibitory actions of GABA in the brain. The activation effects of the phenobarbital-receptor-ionophore complex include increased frequency of chloride channel openings, membrane hyperpolarization and ultimately synaptic inhibition and decreased neuronal excitability. In addition, this agent inhibits glutamate induced depolarization.