

## Medication Treatment Options For Trigeminal Neuralgia

Presented by Howard Biel, R. Ph.

	Brand Name	Generic Name	Is Generic Available?	Usual Adult Dose Range <sup>1</sup>	Maximum Dose <sup>1</sup>	Some Common side effects <sup>2</sup>	Serious side effects (Call MD) <sup>2</sup>	Who Should NOT take this drug <sup>2</sup>	Selected Drug Interactions <sup>2</sup>	Notes <sup>2</sup>
<b>Class: Anticonvulsants (Anti-seizure drugs)<sup>3</sup></b>										
	Tegretol; Carbatrol; Tegretol XR	Carbamazepine <sup>4</sup> (The Gold Standard for Classic TN)	Yes	200 - 800mg/ day	1200mg/ day	<b>Drowsiness, fatigue, dizziness, or nausea.</b>	Fever, sore throat, <b>rash, low blood counts</b>	Bone marrow depression, allergy to drug, or tricyclic compound	Phenobarbital, erythromycin, cimetidine, lithium, grape-fruit juice & more	Requires Frequent Blood Monitoring. Don't Stop Abruptly.
	Klonopin	Clonazepam	Yes	4 to 10 mg/ day	20 mg/ day	CNS depression, drowsiness, muscular movements; increased salivation	Confusion, depression, double vision or abnormal eye movements, tremors	Liver disease, narrow angle glaucoma, sensitivity to benzodiazepines	Oral antifungal drugs, alcohol, narcotics, barbiturates, hypnotics, anti-anxiety agents, AIDS drugs	Blood Tests and Liver Function tests. Do not stop taking this medication abruptly.
	Neurontin	Gabapentin <sup>5</sup>	Yes	300 to 1800 mg/day	3600 mg/day	Dizziness, drowsiness, dry mouth, upset stomach	Changes in vision, eye movements (back and forth), mental or mood changes or memory loss.	Allergy to drug	Antacids, cimetidine, phenytoin, and others	Causes significant drowsiness and will be increased by alcohol and other depressants. Used as an adjunct.
	Lyrica	Pregabalin	No	150 to 600 mg/day	1800 mg/day	Dizziness, sleepiness, dry mouth, swelling of hands and feet, blurry vision, weight gain and trouble concentrating	Unexplained muscle problems, such as muscle pain, soreness or weakness.	Allergy to drug	Avandia, Actos, narcotics, barbiturates, hypnotics, anti- anxiety agents,	Caution in patients with kidney problems or on dialysis, heart problems including heart failure, persons with bleeding problems or low platelet count
	Lamictal	Lamotrigin	No	50 to 300 mg/ day	500 mg/ day	Sleepiness, dizziness, headache, vertigo	Blurred, or double vision, depression, or mood changes, uncontrollable eye movements, unusual weakness or skin rash	Allergy to drug	Oral Contraceptives, Phenytoin, Carbamazepine, Some AIDS drugs,	Do not stop taking this medication abruptly. Used in patients who can't tolerate Tegretol and/or has Diabetic Neuropathy
	Trileptal <sup>6</sup>	Oxcarbazepine	No	300 to 1200 mg/ day	2400 mg/ day	Difficulty sleeping, drowsiness, headache, loss of appetite	Decreased blood sodium, dizziness, fatigue, headache, tremors, drowsiness, diminished concentra-tion, double vision and stammering	Allergy to drug	Seizure meds, Oral contraceptives, calcium channel blockers, and others	Do not stop taking this medication abruptly
	Dilantin	Phenytoin	Yes	300 to 400 mg/ day	600 mg/ day	Clumsiness or unstead- iness, dizziness or drowsiness, loss of appetite, unusual growth of gum tissue	Chest pain or tightness, palpitations, dark urine, skin rash, itching, unusual bleeding or bruising	Sensitive to phenytoin or other hydantoin	Acute alcohol intake, antacids, salicylates, benzodiazep-ines, phenothiazines, estrogens, sulfonamides, cimetidine, trazodone	Phenytoin can cause unusual growth of gum tissues; visit your dentist regularly. Used as adjunct therapy.
	Zonegran	Zonisamide	No	100-300 mg/day	600 mg/ day	Somnolence, anorexia, dizziness, headache, nausea, and agitation/irritability	Difficulty breathing, bruising easily, hallucina-tions, coordination problems, sudden back pain, dark urine	Sensitive to sulfon- amides or zonis- amide	Some AIDS drugs, some anti- seizure drugs, calcium channel blockers, grape-fruit juice and others	Drink 6 to 8 glasses of water a day. This may help to prevent kidney stones
	Gabitril	Tiagabine	No	Titration dosing, 32 - 56 mg/ day	60 mg/ day	Dizziness, drowsiness, stomach upset, indigestion	Confusion, coordination problems, skin rash or itching	Allergy to drug	Alcohol, anti-anxiety drugs, seizure-control drugs	Do not stop taking this medication abruptly

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Class: Anticonvulsants (Anti-seizure drugs) <sup>3</sup>										
	Topamax	Topiramate	No	Titration dosing, 400 mg/day	1000 mg/day	Drowsiness, dizziness, nervousness, confusion, co-ordination difficulties, tingling or numbness in the hands or feet	Blurred or double vision, <b>eye pain</b> , eye redness. If any occur, seek medical attention at once.	Allergy to drug	Seizure meds, Oral Contraceptives, digoxin	Take with food. Do not stop taking this medication abruptly. <b>May cause weight loss.</b>
	Depakote; Depakene	Valproic Acid	Yes	500 - 750 mg/day	1000 mg/day	Drowsiness, dizziness, nervousness, confusion, co-ordination difficulties, tingling or numbness in hands or feet	Blurred or double vision, changes in moods, unusual bleeding or bruising	Liver Disease, Allergy to drug	Alcohol, Seizure meds, blood thinners, antacids, NSAIDs, meds for mental depression	Do not stop taking this medication abruptly.
	Keppra	Levetiracetam	No	1000-3000mg/day	4000mg/day	Drowsiness, loss of strength, headache, infections, dizziness, blurred vision, poor coordination	hallucinations, psychotic episodes, suicide threats, increase in seizures	Allergy to drug	Alcohol	Do not stop taking this medication abruptly, Do not chew or crush tablets

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<b>Class: Antidepressants</b>										
	Elavil	Amitriptyline <sup>9</sup>	Yes	75 - 150 mg/ day <sup>9</sup>	300 mg/ day	Drowsiness or dizziness, dry mouth, weight gain, increased sensitivity of the skin to sun or ultraviolet light	Blurred vision or eye pain, sexual difficulties, confusion, hallucinations, difficulty passing urine	Seizures, narrow angle glaucoma, certain cardio-vascular diseases, Caution in children and teenagers.	Alcohol, Blood thinners, Thioridazine, MAOI's, cimetidine, herbs and dietary supplements, Many others	Caution in patients with impaired liver function. May cause weight gain. Dry Mouth side effects. For Atypical TN & Atypical Facial Pain & TN neuropathic pain
	Vivactil	Protriptyline	No	15 -30 mg/ day <sup>8</sup>	60 mg/ day	Drowsiness, dizziness; dry mouth and eyes; constipation; mild tremor; mild agitation, weakness; or headache; ringing in the ears; nausea	Allergic reaction (swelling of lips, face, or tongue; difficulty breathing), a fast or irregular heartbeat; muscle stiffness, or weakness.	Allergy to drug, seizures, narrow angle glaucoma, certain cardio-vascular diseases, Caution in children and teenagers.	Alcohol, Blood thinners, Thioridazine, MAOI's, cimetidine, herbs and dietary supplements, Thyroid, Many others	Do not stop taking this medication abruptly. May cause dry mouth.
	Pamelor	Nortriptyline	Yes	25 - 75 mg/ day <sup>9</sup>	150 mg/ day	Drowsiness, dizziness; dry mouth and eyes; constipation; mild tremor; mild agitation, weakness; or headache; ringing in the ears; nausea	Allergic reaction (swelling of lips, face, or tongue; difficulty breathing), a fast or irregular heartbeat; muscle stiffness, or weakness.	Allergy to drug, seizures, narrow angle glaucoma, certain cardio-vascular diseases, Caution in children and teenagers.	Alcohol, Blood thinners, Thioridazine, MAOI's, cimetidine, herbs and dietary supplements, Thyroid, Many others	Do not stop taking this medication abruptly. May cause weight loss.
	Prozac	Fluoxetine <sup>10</sup>	Yes	10 -60 mg/ day	80 mg/ day	Headache, insomnia, agitation, restlessness, dry mouth, increased sweating, weight loss	Allergic reaction, fast talking or acting out-of-control; seizures. Antidepressants increased the risk of suicidal thinking in children & adolescents with Major Depressive Disorder (MDD)	Allergy to drug, seizures, suicide risk patients, MAOI drugs, Caution in children and teenagers.	Alcohol, Blood thinners, Thioridazine, MAOI's, cimetidine, herb supplements, Headache meds, Many others	Do not stop taking this medication abruptly.
	Cymbalta	Duloxetine	No	20-60 mg/day	120mg/ day	Gastritis, nausea, dry mouth, hypoglycemia, weight loss, initial insomnia, agitation, blurred vision	Allergic reaction, increase in blood pressure, seizures	Allergy to drug, seizures, suicide risk patients, MAOI drugs, Narrow angle glaucoma (uncontrolled), Caution in children and teenagers.	Alcohol, Blood thinners, Tri - cyclic antidepressants, MAOI's, caffeine, cimetidine, herb supplements	Do not stop taking this medication abruptly.

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<b>Class: Antidepressants</b>										
	Celexa	Citalopram	Yes	10-40 mg/day	60 mg/day	Nausea, insomnia, drowsiness, dizziness, diarrhea, loose stools, sexual dysfunction, dry mouth	Antidepressants increased the risk of suicidal thinking and behavior (suicidality) in short term studies in children and adolescents with Major Depressive Disorder (MDD) and other psychiatric disorders.	Allergy to drug, seizures, MAOI drugs, Pimozide (Orap), Caution in children and teenagers.	Alcohol, MAOI's, NSAID's, cimetidine, lithium, pimozide (Orap), carbamazepine,	Do not stop taking this medication abruptly
	Zoloft	Sertraline	Yes	25- 200 mg/day	200 mg/day	Nausea, insomnia, drowsiness, fatigue, dry mouth, dizziness, sexual dysfunction, weight loss	Antidepressants increased the risk of suicidal thinking and behavior (suicidality) in short term studies in children and adolescents with Major Depressive Disorder (MDD) and other psychiatric disorders.	Allergy to drug, seizures, MAOI drugs, Caution in children and teenagers.	Alcohol, MAOI's, weight loss drugs, buspirone, carbamazepine (Tegretol), NSAID's, lithium, pimozide (Orap), Tricyclic antidepressants (TCAs), warfarin, other SSRIs, triptans, thyroid meds	Do not stop taking this medication abruptly
	Paxil	Paroxetine	Yes	20-40 mg/day	50mg/ day	Nausea, drowsiness, fatigue, dry mouth, headache, dizziness, sexual dysfunction, insomnia, constipation, weight gain	Antidepressants increased the risk of suicidal thinking and behavior (suicidality) in short term studies in children and adolescents with Major Depressive Disorder (MDD) and other psychiatric disorders.	Allergy to drug, Thioridazine, MAOI drugs, Caution in children and teenagers.	Alcohol, Tryptophan, MAOI's, NSAIDs, lithium, Thioridazine, dextromethorphan, St. John's Wort, warfarin, triptans, cimetidine, phenobarbital, phenytoin, TCAs, diazepam, Type 1C antiarrhythmics, quinidine	Do not stop taking this medication abruptly, Paxil and dextromethorphan given together prevents the metabolism of the dextromethorphan resulting in dangerous levels

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<b>Class: Antidepressants</b>										
	Desyrel	Trazodone	Yes	150 - 200 mg/ day	600 mg/day	Drowsiness, nausea, vomiting, headache and dry mouth, constipation	Allergic reaction, priapism, fainting spells, heart palpitations, trembling	Allergy to drug, seizures, suicide risk patients, MAOI drugs, Caution in children and teenagers.	Alcohol, herbs and dietary supplements, some blood pressure and seizure meds, and MAOI drugs	Do not stop taking this medication abruptly.
	Tofranil	Imipramine	Yes	50 -150 mg/ day	200 mg/ day	Drowsiness or dizziness, dry mouth, weight gain, increased sensitivity of the skin to sun or ultraviolet light	Allergic reaction, blurred vision or eye pain, sexual difficulties, confusion, hallucinations	Allergy to drug, seizures, suicide risk patients, MAOI drugs, Caution in children and teenagers.	Alcohol, herbs and dietary supplements, thioridazine, some heart and seizure meds, MAOIs, and others	Do not treat yourself for coughs, colds, or allergies without asking your prescriber
	Sinequan	Doxepin	Yes	100 -150 mg/ day	300 mg/ day	Drowsiness or dizziness, dry mouth, weight gain, increased sensitivity of the skin to sun or ultraviolet light	Allergic reaction, blurred vision or eye pain, sexual difficulties, confusion, hallucinations	Allergy to drug, seizures, suicide risk patients, MAOI drugs, Caution in children and teenagers.	Alcohol, herbs and dietary supplements, thioridazine, some heart and seizure meds, MAOIs, and others	Do not treat yourself for coughs, colds, or allergies without asking your prescriber
	Effexor	Venlafaxine	No	75 -150 mg/ day	375 mg/ day	Weakness, sweating, nausea, constipation, anorexia, vomiting, insomnia, dry mouth, dizziness, nervousness, anxiety, tremor, blurred vision	Allergic reaction, blurred vision or eye pain, sexual difficulties, confusion, hallucinations	Allergy to drug, seizures, suicide risk patients, MAOI drugs, Caution in children and teenagers.	Alcohol, herbs and dietary supplements, cimetidine, some heart and blood pressure meds, MAOIs, and others	Take with food. Monitor blood pressure regularly, can increase blood pressure in some patients. Dry mouth side effects. Do not stop abruptly. For Atypical Facial Pain

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Class: Muscle Relaxants and Anti-spasticity <sup>11</sup>										
	Lioresal	Baclofen <sup>12</sup>	Yes	Titration dosing, 40 - 60 mg/ day	80 mg/ day	Changes in taste, confusion, insomnia, dry mouth, headache	Allergic reaction, chest pain, difficulty passing urine, increased spasticity, vision changes (seeing double), seizures	Allergy to drug	Blood pressure meds, alcohol, antidepressants, tranquilizers, muscle relaxants, pain relievers	Do not stop taking this medication abruptly. Adjunct therapy in clinical studies especially in patients with MS. Used as an adjunct with Tegretol and/or Elavil
	Flexeril	Cyclobenzaprine <sup>13</sup>	Yes	20 -40 mg/ day	60 mg/ day	Drowsiness, dry mouth, dizziness	Allergic reaction, fast heartbeat, fainting spells, seizures, unusual weakness	Allergy to drug, overactive thyroid, certain heart conditions, glaucoma	Alcohol, tranquilizers, anti-depressants	You may get drowsy or dizzy. Do not drive, use machinery, or do anything that needs mental alertness
	Zanaflex	Tizanidine <sup>14</sup>	Yes	8 -24 mg/ day	36 mg/ day	Dry mouth, blurred vision, sedation, weakness, dizziness, constipation	Confusion, fainting spells, low blood pressure, heart palpitations, chest pain	Allergy to drug, low blood pressure. Liver disease	Alcohol, acetaminophen, baclofen, sedatives, some blood pressure meds, vioxx	Do NOT take with food until you have talked with your health care provider.

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<b>Class: Analgesic Drugs</b>										
<b>Subclass: NSAIDs<sup>15</sup></b>										
		Aspirin, Ibuprofen, Naproxen, Lodine, Toradol, Indocin, Feldene, Clinoril, Indomethacin, Tramadol, & others	Yes	Varies	Varies	Nausea, gas, heartburn, constipation, dizziness	Signs of bleeding from the stomach (black tarry stools, blood in the urine), stomach pain, swelling of feet or ankles	Allergy to drug, taking blood thinners, pregnancy, aspirin sensitive asthma	alcohol, ACE inhibitor blood pressure meds, blood thinners, cigarettes, lithium, herbal products, methotrexate	Do not smoke cigarettes or drink alcohol; these increase irritation to your stomach and can make it more susceptible to damage
<b>Subclass: Opiates<sup>16</sup></b>										
	MS Contin	Morphine Sulfate Time Release	Yes	Individual dosing based on patient specific needs	Individual dosing based on patient specific needs	Constipation, nausea, vomiting, lightheadedness, dizziness, sedation, dysphoria, euphoria, and sweating	Confusion, fainting spells, restlessness, seizures, breathing difficulties, slow or fast heartrate	Allergy to drug, Acute or severe bronchial asthma	Alcohol, carbamazepine, gabapentin, CNS drugs, metformin, meds for blood pressure, pain reliefers, antidepressants, many more	TABLET MUST BE SWALLOWED WHOLE. DO NOT BREAK THE TABLET IN HALF. DO NOT CRUSH OR CHEW.
	Roxanol	Morphine Sulfate Immediate Release	Yes	Individual dosing based on patient specific needs	Individual dosing based on patient specific needs	Constipation, nausea, vomiting, lightheadedness, dizziness, sedation, dysphoria, euphoria, and sweating	Confusion, fainting spells, restlessness, seizures, breathing difficulties, slow or fast heartrate	Allergy to drug, Acute or severe bronchial asthma	Alcohol, carbamazepine, gabapentin, CNS drugs, metformin, meds for blood pressure, pain reliefers, antidepressants, many more	The maximum analgesic effect occurs 60 minutes after dose is given
	Vicodin	Hydrocodone/ Acetaminophen 5-500	Yes	1 or 2 tablets every 4 to 6 hours as needed for pain	Not more than 8 tabs/ per day	Constipation, nausea, vomiting, lightheadedness, dizziness, sedation, pinpoint pupils, euphoria, and sweating	Chest pain or irregular heartbeat, breathing difficulties, severe rash, unusual weakness, fever, chills, muscle pain	Allergy to individual drugs, liver or kidney disease, hepatitis, lung disease or breathing problems	Alcohol, seizure meds, blood thinners, antacids, cimetidine, meds for mental depression and tranquilizers	Do not take more than the recommended dose due to the possibility of liver or kidney damage or Hearing Loss

	Duragesic Patch	Fentanyl (transdermal)	No	Dose should be individualized. The majority of patients are adequately maintained with dose every 72 hours	Individualized dose required. Some patients require a dose every 48 hours	Itching, blurred vision, constipation, dizziness, sedation, pinpoint pupils, flushing, headache, dry mouth	Hypo-ventilation, hypotension, hypertension, seizures, fainting spells, unusual weakness, severe rash	Allergy to fentanyl or meperidine, or adhesives, skin problems, lung, liver or kidney disease	Alcohol, seizure meds, erythromycin, HIV meds, meds for mental depression high blood pressure, seizures, tranquilizers, and many more	Do NOT cut or damage Duragesic. Avoid contact of Duragesic patches with eyes due to irritation; Increased body temp (fever) can cause drug to be released more quickly and can lead to toxicity
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<b>Subclass: Other Analgesic Drugs</b>										
	Lidoderm Patch	5% Lidocaine (dermal patch)	No	Apply 1 - 3 patches that can be cut to the desired size. Wear for 12 hrs per 24 hrs	May apply up to 3 patches at a time. Do not wear longer than 12 hrs per 24 hrs	Skin irritation, redness, swelling, unusual sensations such as numbness, tingling, or burning feelings	Skin rash, abnormal heart rate, wheezing or difficulty breathing	Allergy to local anesthetics or adhesives, liver disease, skin problems	Medicines that control heart rhythm, digoxin, creams or ointments with local anesthetics	May cut patches to size desired. Avoid contact of lidocaine patches with eyes due to severe irritation
	Zostrix cream	Capsaicin (topical cream)	Yes	Apply & Rub-in-well a small amount 3-4 times daily	Up to 8 times daily	Skin irritation, redness, swelling, unusual sensations such as numbness, tingling, or burning feelings	Skin breakdown, cough, very uncomfortable burning or stinging at site of application	Allergy to drug or red chili peppers, broken or infected skin	None Known	Avoid use near eyes or other sensitive areas of the body.

Class: Miscellaneous Medications						
Caffergot	Combination Drug	No	Caffergot is a drug that is routinely used to treat migraine headaches. Some anecdotal evidence suggests that it might be effective for some cases of atypical TN.			
Mexitil	Mexiletine	Yes	Ordinarily used for heart rhythm problems. Experimental use for neuropathic pain. Use for TN pain has been suggested.			
Cytotec	Misoprostol	No	This anti-ulcer drug shows promise for patients whose TN is the result of multiple sclerosis.			
Orap	Pimozide	No	Used primarily for schizophrenia and Tourette's Syndrome. Use for TN has been suggested.			
Imitrex	Sumatriptan	No	Used for migraines and cluster headaches. At least one reference has suggested use for TN.			
Ketalar	Ketamine	No	Used for analgesia and anesthesia. Some studies show promise for TN.			
Namenda	Memantine	No	Dr. Joseph Vaughn a neurologist of Tyler, TX has used Namenda with success for TN; See TNA newsletter July 2006			
Catapres	Clonidine	Yes	Nerve blocks utilizing clonidine, fentanyl, and bupivacaine reported to be effective for TN See <i>Anaesthesia Journal</i> 2006 page 61			
<b>Notes:</b> The list summarizes treatment options that may provide resolution or relief for TN.						
These options are often combined, and not all of them apply for all stages of treatment in all patients.						
<sup>1</sup> Dosages listed are from medical literature for informational purposes only. Dosages should be individualized for each patient.						
<sup>2</sup> This information is not intended to cover all possible uses, precautions, interactions, or adverse effects for this drug. If you have questions about the drug(s) you are taking, check with your health care professional.						
<sup>3</sup> Anticonvulsants are usually the most effective drugs for treating classical TN pain. Unfortunately, these drugs tend to have serious side effects.						
<sup>4</sup> Carbamazepine is an anticonvulsant and is often the first medication to be tried in treating Trigeminal Neuralgia.						
<sup>5</sup> Gabapentin sometimes is used in combination with other drugs, as it may strengthen the effects of these drugs.						
<sup>6</sup> Trileptal is as effective as carbamazepine, has fewer drug interaction problems, & appears to work faster and to cause less drowsiness. Most Expensive						
<sup>7</sup> Antidepressants are effective for atypical forms of TN. Good results when antidepressants are used together with anticonvulsants. Tri-cyclic antidepressants are most used. Has serious side effects, including weight gain. Therefore, other types are being investigated.						
<sup>8</sup> Amitriptyline is the most commonly used tri-cyclic antidepressant in the treatment of TN and other pain conditions.						
<sup>9</sup> Dosage for TN is lower than as antidepressant, can start as low as 10 mg/day and is increased gradually until there is no decrease in pain.						
<sup>10</sup> Fluoxetine to treat TN is a possible choice when the side effects of tricyclic antidepressants are bad enough to make them unusable.						
<sup>11</sup> Muscle relaxant drugs are somewhat related to anticonvulsants, but act on the muscles rather than the nerves themselves. They can be effective in the early stages of atypical TN and are often used in conjunction with other drugs, especially Tegretol.						
<sup>12</sup> The primary use of baclofen is to reduce spasticity. As such, it appears to be most often used for TN related to MS (multiple sclerosis). Since the drug affects the nervous system as well as the muscles, it may also help TN symptoms when used with anticonvulsant.						
<sup>13</sup> Cyclobenzaprine is a muscle relaxant and is not used to reduce spasticity and therefore may not provide relief in TN.						
<sup>14</sup> Tizanidine works by reducing spasticity. Therefore, it may be as useful as baclofen for TN symptoms when used with anticonvulsants.						
<sup>15</sup> Unfortunately, in TN few painkillers are effective for pain. Even strong opiates often do not help, let alone over-the-counter NSAIDs. These drug groups cannot be considered to be in the mainstream for relieving TN pain, but are included here for information purposes.						
<sup>16</sup> The use of opiates to manage pain related to Trigeminal Neuralgia, Atypical Trigeminal Neuralgia, and Atypical Facial Pain (ATFP) is controversial. However, some pain patients do get some relief from their pain with prescription opiates.						