

Patient information

Pregabalin and its use in pain management

Why do I need pregabalin?

Pregabalin is a drug used to treat nerve pain. This type of pain is often not relieved by traditional painkillers. It can be used in combination with other painkillers to improve your pain relief.

How does pregabalin work?

Pregabalin works by changing the way in which nerves send messages to your brain. When something presses on a nerve, or a nerve doesn't work properly in some way, the nerve can send false messages to your brain. The brain thinks that a part of your body is being hurt when it is not. This makes you actually feel pain. By altering the way nerves work, pregabalin may reduce your pain.

Isn't pregabalin for treating epilepsy?

Yes, pregabalin is used for treating epilepsy by 'calming down nerves'. Research has shown that pregabalin by a 'similar process' is also effective in helping to relieve certain types of pain.

How long will pregabalin take to work?

You should notice that your pain starts to improve over one to two weeks after starting pregabalin, but it may take longer in some people. However, some people feel benefit straight away. Your treatment will be reviewed when you next see the doctor or nurse.

How long will I have to take pregabalin for?

If pregabalin is helpful, you can continue taking it and your treatment will be reviewed regularly. It is important that you continue to take your regular painkiller, unless you have been advised to stop taking these by your doctor.

How should I take pregabalin?

You should take pregabalin as instructed by your Doctor. Please see table in leaflet.

Pregabalin can be taken with or without food and should be taken in addition to your current tablets unless you are told otherwise. Pregabalin is normally started at a low dose and the dose gradually adjusted to gain optimal effect whilst minimising side effects. Dosages are normally increased after an interval of 3-7 days.

If you feel that the dose of pregabalin is too strong or too weak for you then discuss this with your Doctor.

				Dose		
Day	Morning			Afternoon		

Do I need any tests whilst I am taking pregabalin?

No, you will not need any special checks whilst you are taking pregabalin.

Are there any side effects?

All drugs have side effects but they do not happen in all the people who take them. The most common side effects of pregabalin are dizziness, sleepiness and decreased concentration which may increase the occurrence of accidental falls, especially in the elderly. Therefore, you may need to be careful until you have become used to the effects of pregabalin. Other possible side effects are detailed in the drug information sheet supplied with the tablets.

If you have troublesome side effects from pregabalin speak to your doctor, nurse or pharmacist straight away. Side effects from pregabalin may reduce or disappear after taking the same dose for a few days.

Can I drink alcohol whilst taking pregabalin?

We advise that you should avoid drinking alcohol whilst taking pregabalin.

Is it safe for me to drive or operate machinery whilst I am taking pregabalin?

Since pregabalin may cause dizziness, sleepiness and decreased concentration we advise that you should not drive or operate complex machinery until these effects have worn off.

Is it safe for me to take other medicines whilst I am receiving treatment with pregabalin?

The side effects of dizziness, sleepiness and decreased concentration may be increased if pregabalin is taken together with certain other drugs, namely Oxycodone (used as pain reliever) or Lorazepam (used for treating anxiety).

Before you take or buy any new medicines – including herbal remedies – tell your doctor or pharmacist that you are taking pregabalin and ask their advice.

What should I do if I forget to take a dose?

You should take a missed dose as soon as you remember. However, if it is almost time for your next dose, skip the missed dose and take your medication as normal. **DO NOT 'double up' to make up for your missed dose.**

Stopping pregabalin

Do not stop taking pregabalin unless your Doctor tells you to. If pregabalin is discontinued then this is normally done gradually over a number of weeks.

Remember:

This medication has been prescribed for you. It should not be taken by anyone else.

Additional information

If you are intolerant to some **sugars** please speak to your doctor before commencing pregabalin.

The information in this leaflet is not intended to replace your doctor's advice or the information supplied in the product information sheet. If you require more information or have any questions, please speak to your doctor or contact one of the following.

Clinical Nurse Specialist
Telephone: 01284 713330

Important safety messages

- **Store all medicines safely**
Make sure they cannot be seen or reached by children or vulnerable adults. Please check the pharmacy label for storage instructions such as 'store in the fridge'.
- **Never share your medicines**
Your medicines have been prescribed only for you to take - nobody else.
- **Disposal of medicines no longer required**
Unused medicines must be immediately disposed of safely. Safe disposal can be ensured by returning unwanted medicines to your community pharmacy or the dispensary if your GP is a dispensing practice.
- **Use the medicine as directed on the label**
Before you leave hospital make sure you understand exactly how and

when to take your medicines, and you know how to dispose of your unused opioids.

Further guidance can be found in the WSH Pharmacy department's "Information about your medications" leaflet.

If you would like any information regarding access to the West Suffolk Hospital and its facilities please visit the website for AccessAble (formerly DisabledGo) <https://www.accessable.co.uk>



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