Patient Information

Information for patients prescribed Pregabalin

What is pregabalin used for?

Pregabalin is used to treat persistent pain, but is particularly good for nerve pain such as burning, shooting or stabbing pain. Pregabalin belongs to a group of medications called anticonvulsants which are also used to treat epilepsy.

When should I take it?

Pregabalin is normally started in small doses, between once and twice a day. The doses are usually gradually increased; your prescriber will guide you through increasing your dose.

If you are taking antacid medication, please wait for 2 hours after taking it before taking pregabalin.

How should I take my pregabalin?

- Tablets must be swallowed whole with a glass of water.
- Pregabalin can be taken on a full or empty stomach.
- Do not take more than prescribed.

How long will it take to work?

Every patient is different; you may notice some initial benefit within a few days, however it may take weeks.

Pregabalin does not work for everyone. If you do not feel any improvement in your pain after 4-6 weeks, do not suddenly stop your medication, please speak to your doctor.

What are the side effects of pregabalin?

Most side effects are mild and it is expected that they will go away after several days. Usually side effects are worse after starting pregabalin or increasing doses.

Common side effects

- Drowsiness
- Dizziness
- Fatigue
- Muscle tremor

If you have any of these side effects and they are severe, please speak to your doctor or pharmacist for advice.

Less common side effects

- Visual disturbances
- Indigestion
- Weight gain
- Leg swelling
- Memory loss
- Mood changes
- Hallucinations
- Rash

If any of these side effects occur, please contact your doctor or pharmacist for advice.
Can I take this medication long term?
Yes, if it helps. Please consider reviewing your medication with your doctors to assess if there is still a need to take it.

Can I drink alcohol?
Alcohol can increase the sedative effects of pregabalin. It is advisable to abstain from alcohol when you start taking pregabalin. Once you are on a stable dose, you may drink alcohol in moderation, but please be cautious as it may make you more drowsy than normal.

Can I drive?
It is advised that you do not drive if you have recently started taking pregabalin or if you have recently changed doses. Once on a stable dose you can drive, as long as you do not feel drowsy. It remains the responsibility of all drivers, including patients, to consider whether they believe their driving may be impaired on every occasion when they drive.

What should I tell the doctor?
- If you are allergic to any drugs.
- Any other medication you are taking, including herbal and over the counter medications.
- If you are pregnant or breastfeeding.
- If you have kidney problems.
- If you have or have had a history of excess alcohol, recreational drug use or addiction to prescribed or over the counter medications.

What do I do if I miss a dose?
- Take it as soon as you remember.
- However, if you are closer to your next dose, skip the missed dose and take your medication as normal.
- Do not take 2 doses together.

What do I do if I want to stop taking pregabalin?
If you want to stop or reduce your pregabalin, please discuss this with your doctor. Do not suddenly stop taking your medication, as you may experience side effects.

Where can I find more information on pregabalin?
- Please ask your prescriber for more information.
- Your pharmacist can answer your questions.
- Your medication packet will contain a patient information leaflet for you to read.
- A good website to use is EMC which can be found at https://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/