

## PHARMACY DIRECTORATE

# Nortriptyline

## Patient Information Leaflet

### Patient information

The information in this leaflet is to guide your use of nortriptyline this medicine safely. Further information is available inside the medication packaging.

### What is nortriptyline for?

Nortriptyline is a medicine which may help improve your pain control. It is different from other pain relief drugs. It can help nerve pain, for example shooting or burning pains.

Nortriptyline is also used to treat depression, but you have been prescribed it to improve pain control. You may find the medication leaflet supplied with your nortriptyline only gives information for the use of this drug in depression.

### How should I take nortriptyline?

- The starting dose for nortriptyline for pain is 10mg once a day. The dose is usually taken 1-2 hours before normal sleep time.
- It may be 2 weeks before you start to see a real benefit. Your dose of nortriptyline may be slowly increased to between 50mg and 75mg a day depending on how helpful it is for your pain relief, your doctor will advise how to do this (see table below)

Week	Dose (once a day)
Week 1	10mg
Week 2	20mg
Week 3	30mg
Week 4	40mg
Review of treatment with doctor	

- **Swallow the tablets with a drink of water**

### Are there any side effects?

All medicines can sometimes cause side effects. If you are worried, you can talk to your doctor, nurse or pharmacist.

The most common side effects of this drug are drowsiness, dry mouth, constipation, feeling lightheaded or dizziness. Some people also develop blurred vision or problems passing urine.

**Most** of these side effects will improve after several days, so it is worth carrying on with the nortriptyline

### How to manage side effects

- Dry mouth- Drink more **non**-alcoholic drinks, chewing also increases saliva in the mouth.
- Constipation- Drink more non-alcoholic drinks, eat plenty of fibre containing foods and fruit and vegetables.
- Please see your pharmacist or GP if problems continue.

A common side effect of this drug is drowsiness. If you are drowsy you must not drive or operate machinery.

**Drinking alcohol may make you more drowsy.** Restrict your alcohol intake to 1-2 units per day (1unit= ½ pint beer or lager a small glass of wine or a measure of spirit).

### How long will I take nortriptyline for?

You will probably need to take this medicine for as long as you have the pain.

Other treatments or pain killers may also help your pain and the dose of nortriptyline may need to be reduced.

**Please do not stop nortriptyline suddenly.** It needs to be reduced gradually **over 4 weeks**. Please discuss with your doctor before stopping.

### What if I am prescribed other medicines?

Some other medicines can affect the way nortriptyline works. Always tell your doctor you are taking nortriptyline when they prescribe other drugs.

### Storage instructions

As with all medicines, keep them in a safe place away from children.

**Should you wish to ask any further questions about your medication please do not hesitate to ask the Doctor, Nurse or Pharmacist.**

Author: A McConnell, Pharmacist Date: July 2010  
Approved by: Pharmacy Directorate Management Board –  
Medicines Management Committee – Calderdale + Huddersfield NHS Foundation Trust  
NHS Kirklees Medicines Management + NHS Bradford + Airedale Medicines  
Management  
Review Date: November 2013  
Version 1.0