

Drug information sheet: Pregbalin

What type of drug is it?

Pregbalin was discovered to be useful in controlling epilepsy as well as relieving certain types of pain. It works differently to other pain killers and is especially good at reducing pain from nerves (neuropathic pain). It works by stabilising nerves that have become over-active, and are sending unwanted signals to your brain.

Is it safe?

Pregbalin has been used successfully by thousands of patients for the treatment of neuropathic pain. In order for it to be used safely before starting this medicine it is important that you have told your pain specialist/GP about any other medicines, allergies and medical problems that you may have or suffered from in the past. In particular, you should tell them if you have kidney problems.

NHS England have advised that pregbalin has been shown to have the potential to be abused and to lead to dependence. You should not share this medication with others.

Are there any side effects?

As with all medications pregbalin can cause side effects but not everyone is affected by them. The most common side effects are dizziness, drowsiness, constipation, and dry mouth. A small number of people may feel sick, have diarrhoea and weight gain. Most of these side effects will improve after several days, so it is worth carrying on with Pregbalin. If these side effects become unbearable as you increase the dose, then do not increase any further and stay at the dose for a few days to see if they settle.

There are some simple ways to help manage some of the side effects.

- Dry mouth – Drink more non-alcoholic drinks, chewing gum also increases saliva in the mouth.
- Constipation – Eat plenty of fibre containing foods, fruit and vegetables and keep hydrated.

How should I take it?

Pregbalin does not work straight away like an ordinary pain killer. The capsules often need to be taken regularly for a few weeks before a benefit is noticed. The dose will usually start at 75mg twice a day and may be increased after weekly intervals up to a maximum of 300mg twice a day.

Increasing the dose, or decreasing the dose must be done according to the prescription provided by your GP who will monitor you for pain relief and side effects as this will decide your maximum dose.

If you do not experience pain relief or side effects are troublesome we recommend gradually decreasing your dose over at least a week in order to reduce withdrawal symptoms.

Who do I contact with queries or concerns?

The information in this leaflet is to guide your use of pregbalin safely. Further information is available inside the medication package.

If you have any further questions or concerns about taking this medicine, please contact your prescribing doctor or dispensing pharmacist.