

Loperamide for use by patients with ileostomies (page 1 of 2)

Loperamide is commonly known as "Imodium" (its brand name). Please always read the information leaflet given with any medicine before starting to take it.

It comes in capsules, tablets, melt formulation (dissolves on the tongue) or syrup. Your Stoma Care Nurse or your doctor will advise you which preparation is best for you.

What is loperamide and how does it work?

Loperamide is a drug which acts to slow down the movement of the bowel. It will thicken your stools and reduce the amount of stools you pass. This means the body has more time in which to absorb fluid and nutrients from food and drinks you take.

The ideal consistency is a 'porridge-like' stool.

Taking loperamide

- take loperamide tablets with a drink, preferably half an hour before food
- syrup and melts need to be taken half an hour before food but NOT with a drink
- the amount of loperamide you need to take depends on the output from your ileostomy
- the output will depend on what you have eaten or drunk; if you have been on holiday and eaten different foods or if the weather is hot
- avoid or reduce your intake of alcohol, coffee, cola and chocolate as these can also cause a loose stool
- if the stool is very liquid, increase the amount of loperamide you take
- if the output is too thick, reduce the amount of loperamide you take
- make sure that you drink at least 8-10 glasses of water a day.



If you need your information in another language or medium (audio, large print, etc) please contact Customer Care on 0800 374 208 or send an email to: customer care@salisbury.nhs.uk

You are entitled to a copy of any letter we write about you. Please ask if you want one when you come to the hospital.

Please complete The Friends & Family Test to tell us about your experience at: www.salisbury.nhs.uk/FriendsFamily or download our App from the Apple App store or Google Play Store.

The evidence used in the preparation of this leaflet is available on request. Please email: patient.information@salisbury.nhs.uk if you would like a reference list.

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How much loperamide should I take?

- if you need to thicken your stool you will probably start by taking 4mg to 6mg per day
- you can increase or decrease the dose according to your ileostomy output
- the dose needed can change every day
- up to 16mg of loperamide can be taken in a 24 hour period. This could be increased under your doctor's supervision.

What are the possible side effects of loperamide?

- all drugs can have side effects. Some are more common than others and some are very rare
- everyone is different so they may react differently to medication
- loperamide sometimes causes side effects such as nausea, vomiting, tiredness, bloatedness, abdominal cramps, drowsiness, dizziness, constipation and dry mouth. There may be an allergic reaction like skin rash, including urticaria (itching)
- please discuss any of these with your doctor or Stoma Care Nurse.

What would happen if loperamide wasn't taken?

The stool from your ileostomy would be looser and it could mean that if you were losing a lot of liquid you could risk becoming dehydrated. If this happens, it must be dealt with to avoid kidney damage.

If the stool is too liquid and in large amounts, the ileostomy may become more difficult to manage. You would need to empty it more often, day and night, affecting your quality of life and sleep.

Are there any reasons why I should not take loperamide?

Do not take any more loperamide if you have been vomiting or the ileostomy stops working. Continue to have sips of fluids and contact your doctor or Stoma Care Nurse.

How should I store loperamide?

Keep it out of the reach of children. Do not store it above 25°C and protect it from light and moisture. Keep the medicine in its container. Do not share it with other people.

If I need more loperamide?

You can get repeat prescriptions from your doctor until you return to the hospital. You can then discuss with your consultant or Stoma Care Nurse whether you need to continue taking it.

Contact details:

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