

Pregabalin for pain relief (page 1 of 2)

Why do I need Pregabalin and how does it work?

Pregabalin is a drug used to relieve the intensity of nerve pain and calm nerve activity in the brain. In larger doses it is used to treat epilepsy.

Pregabalin was developed as an alternative to Gabapentin. It is chemically related but is less likely to cause side effects such as dizziness and drowsiness. Some people find it a useful alternative - especially if Gabapentin has helped in the past but the side effects proved troublesome.

As well as decreasing the number of pain signals sent out by the body, Pregabalin can help alleviate anxiety and improve the quality of your sleep. For this reason it can be helpful for patients with fibromyalgia.

It is often prescribed to help relieve nerve pain (also known as neuropathic pain) in patients with diabetes or for those suffering chronic pain from nerve injury or nerve damage, such as pain from shingles.

How long will Pregabalin take to work?

It may take several weeks to find the right dose for you. The dose is increased slowly. Some people however notice an improvement, especially with their sleep, after taking one capsule each evening.

How long will I have to take Pregabalin for?

Once a suitable dose is found, you will probably need to take it for about three months or so. to assess its long term benefit

Are there any side effects?

To keep side effects as low as possible you usually begin taking one low dose capsule in the evening. The dose may be increased after a few days to one capsule morning and evening. If you have kidney disease your doctor may wish to prescribe a lower dose. You will be kept on the lowest possible dose that helps you. Please do not increase the dose without consulting your doctor. Likewise do not suddenly stop the drug.

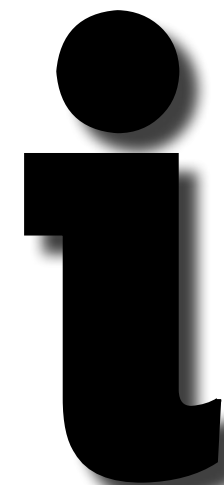
Your doctor will monitor you carefully.

Although not everyone experiences side effects, the common ones associated with Pregabalin are:

- dizziness, sleepiness
- feeling unsteady, or light headed, shaky movements, tremor

Pain Clinic 01722 336262 ext 2050

Rheumatology Clinic 01722 336262 ext 4217



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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.

- increased appetite or weight gain / fluid retention
- nausea, dry mouth, constipation
- problems with memory or concentration
- mood changes, feeling emotional.

Serious side effects

Stop taking Pregabalin if any of the following occur:

- **Allergic reaction** Itching, swelling of your face or tongue, difficulty breathing
- **Mood change** Very rarely people notice a change in their thinking or behaviour. They may feel confused anxious or aggressive. Those around them may notice they are behaving out of character. Distressing thoughts or worsening feelings of depression including thinking about suicide. These side effects should be taken very seriously.

Please see your GP urgently if you have any of these side effects or if you are worried about any other side effects

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 try to 'double up' to make up for your missed dose.

Is it safe for me to take other medicines with Pregabalin?

Before you take or buy any new medicines including herbal remedies please tell your doctor or pharmacist that you are taking Pregabalin and ask their advice. You should not take other anti-epileptic medication with Pregabalin.

Can I drink alcohol whilst taking Pregabalin?

If Pregabalin makes you feel tired or dizzy or gives you other side effects alcohol may increase these side effects. Because of this we advise you not to drink alcohol if you have any side effects.

Is it safe for me to drive whilst taking Pregabalin?

Pregabalin may cause drowsiness or slow your reactions. If you feel this way please do not drive for at least two days after starting Pregabalin or changing the dose. Likewise if you work or need to stay focussed, we suggest that you start the medication at a quiet time for you (such as at the weekend), in order to get used to its effect.

date	Dose		
	morning	lunch	night

