



Information about your To Take Out (TTO) medicine

Taking medicine – Some questions and answers about side effects

You will find more information in the **Patient Information Leaflet** provided with each medicine.

If you have received a medicine without a leaflet, please ask a member of the Pharmacy team for one.



Who do I contact with queries and concerns?

If you have any questions about your medication, including its purpose and possible side effects, please contact the pharmacy department.

Mount Vernon Cancer Centre

Monday – Friday: 9am – 5pm

Outpatient pharmacy department:

020 3826 2505/2506

East and North Hertfordshire NHS Trust Patient Helpline (for Mount Vernon Cancer Centre & Lister Hospital)

Monday – Friday: 2pm – 4pm

Pharmacy Helpline: 01438 286150

Pharmacy Helpline email:

Medinfo.enhtr@nhs.net

For urgent medical advice:

**24 hour Acute Oncology Service:
07825 028855**



Mount Vernon Cancer Centre
East and North Hertfordshire NHS Trust
Mount Vernon Hospital
Rickmansworth Road
Northwood, Middlesex HA6 2RN

Top tips to get the most from your medicines:

- **Take the medicines as directed on the labels.** Make sure you understand exactly how and when to take your medicines before you leave the hospital
- **Read the Patient Information Leaflet provided with the medication**
- **Complete the full course of medication prescribed.** Anything less than a full course of treatment could prevent you from getting completely better even though you 'feel' well again
- **If you miss a dose, don't try to 'catch up'** by taking two or three missed doses at once. If you are worried about the missed doses, ask your doctor or pharmacist
- **Keep your medicines in a cool, dry place, out of sight and reach of children.** Medicines can 'go off' if they are stored in warm, damp places like bathrooms
- **Buying medicine:** tell the pharmacist about any other medicines you are already taking
- **Never share your medicines:** your prescription is written for you. Never let anyone else take your medicines, even if your symptoms are similar. Likewise, don't take anyone else's
- **Do not transfer your new medicines into other medicine bottles**
- **If you have any out-of-date or unwanted medicines** take them to your local pharmacy who will dispose of them safely

Produced by the Lynda Jackson Macmillan Centre
Information team on behalf of the Pharmacy department

© LJM 2018

PI 82 published 08/18 [review date 08/20]

1. Your To Take Out (TTO) medication

You have been issued with a supply of medicines to take home. This may be in addition to what you already have at home, or your medication may have changed. This will have been explained to you.

Your discharge letter will provide written information about your medicines and a copy will either be given to you to take to your GP or sent directly to them so they can update your medical records.

The pharmacy team will normally ensure you have at least a 14 day supply of medication.

2. What do medicines do?

The medicine you are taking may:

- treat your condition
- control your condition
- treat the symptoms of your condition
- prevent you from becoming unwell

3. How much medicine should I take?

The white pharmacy label on your medicine and the Patient Information Leaflet inside the box or packet will tell you how and when to take it. Please read these before you take your medicine.

Some medicines have special instructions, such as whether you should take them before or after food. These instructions will also be on the pharmacy label.

4. Will my medicine cause side effects?

Most people take medicines without suffering any unwanted side effects. But all medicines can cause problems.

The chance (the risk) of having a side effect can be described using words or figures or both. This is how risk may be described in your Patient Information Leaflet:

- **very common:** more than 1 in 10 people taking the medicine are likely to have the side effect
- **common:** between 1 in 10 and 1 in 100 people are affected
- **uncommon:** between 1 in 100 and 1 in 1000 people are affected
- **rare:** between 1 in 1000 and 1 in 10,000 people are affected
- **very rare:** fewer than 1 in 10,000 people are affected

Note: If a side effect has a risk of 1 in 1000, then 999 out of every 1000 people taking the medicine are not expected to experience that side effect.

5. How can I reduce the risk of side effects?

Take your medicine as advised by your doctor or pharmacist.

Be careful about mixing medicines.

Some medicines should not be taken together. It is important to tell the pharmacist or whoever prescribed it about any other medicines you are already taking. Don't forget to tell them about herbal remedies or any non-prescribed medicines you may have bought in a pharmacy or supermarket.

Be aware that some things can increase the chance of your medicine causing side effects.

The leaflet provided with your medicine will tell you about any known risk factors and what you can do to reduce the chance of side effects.

6. Do side effects always come on straight away?

It depends on the medicine and the person. Some side effects can happen immediately, for example an allergic reaction. Others might not start for several days or weeks (eg, skin rashes) or even longer (eg, stomach problems).

In general, side effects are most likely to happen soon after you start a new medicine or after your dose has been increased. Quite often, mild side effects will go away as your body adjusts to the new medicine or dose.

7. What should I do if I feel unwell after taking my medicine?

Check your Patient Information Leaflet on side effects and action to take.

If in doubt, speak to your doctor, nurse or pharmacist, or call the numbers at the end of this leaflet.

8. Help with medicines after leaving hospital

If your medicines were changed whilst you were in hospital, you are eligible to have a **Discharge Medicines Use Review** at your local pharmacy.

This is a free NHS service and enables you to discuss any problems which you may have or maybe learn how to improve the medication effectiveness.