

PREGABALIN AND GABAPENTIN FOR PAIN MANAGEMENT

Pregabalin and gabapentin are used to treat some types of persistent pain. They are often prescribed for nerve pain, such as burning, shooting or stabbing pain. These medicines belong to a group of medicines called anticonvulsants which are also used to treat epilepsy. You may notice that information from the manufacturer may not mention your type of pain.

Pregabalin and Gabapentin work by changing the way that nerves send messages to your brain. If the messages are reduced, then the pain will be reduced.

- When commenced for neuropathic pain or fibromyalgia, the medication will be prescribed for a test period to ascertain if they are effective.
- Normally, the starting dose is small and may be taken between one and three times a day, but the dose will be gradually increased.
- A follow-up appointment should be made to assess how well the medicine is working.
- The prescriber may advise gradually increasing the dose up to the maximum tolerated within the suggested dose range.
- If you do not notice any improvement in your symptoms after taking one of these medicines for approximately 6-8 weeks then the medication will be gradually reduced and stopped.
- If the medication is successful, it will be reviewed on an annual basis to ascertain ongoing effectiveness.

ALCOHOL

Alcohol increases the sedative effects of pregabalin and gabapentin, it is best not to drink alcohol when you start taking it. Once settled on a steady dose, you may drink alcohol in moderation but it may make you more drowsy than normal. (1)

DRIVING

Please see the DVLA website for information on driving when taking prescription medicines such as opioids. **DVLA advice drug- driving**

ADDICTION

If you believe you are addicted to gabapentin or pregabalin medication then please arrange an appointment with the GP or pharmacist at the surgery. We can help support you with a reduction plan which is safe. We would not advise stopping this medication abruptly.

Further information can also be found at **FORWARD LEEDS Forward Leeds self referral form**

MISUSE OF MEDICATION

Pregabalin and gabapentin have the potential for misuse. They may cause physical dependence, such as insomnia, weight gain, mood swings, double vision nausea and vomiting. Where any of the risk factors are identified for a patient an appointment with a GP or pharmacist will be made before any further medication is prescribed.

LOST PRESCRIPTIONS WILL NOT BE REPLACED.

If you take higher doses than prescribed and run out of medication before the next prescription is due, you will NOT be prescribed extra tablets.

These medicines are controlled drugs and will not be prescribed early.

PRESCRIPTION WAITING TIME REMINDER.

The practice endeavors to fulfil the following.

PRESCRIPTION REQUESTS; Prescription requests take up to two full working day's to action. Please be aware this will only lead to a prescription if it is appropriate to prescribe.

Please refrain from waiting in the reception area for the prescription process to take place. It will not result in prescriptions being fulfilled any quicker.

Thank you for your co-operation.

- (1) Faculty of pain medicine from the royal college of anaesthetists, Version 3.1 2017, online, accessed 1/2/21.