

## **Patient information leaflet**

# Olanzapine to treat nausea and vomiting

### Name of the medicine:

Olanzapine

The information given in this leaflet should be read along with any patient information leaflet provided by the manufacturer with your medicine. Click Olanzapine 5 mg orodispersible tablets - Summary of Product Characteristics (SmPC) - (emc) (medicines.org.uk)

#### What is it for?

Olanzapine is licensed for use as an antipsychotic medication (medicines used for treating some mental health conditions). It has also been shown to help with feeling sick (nausea) and vomiting.

Most medicines available in the UK have a licence. The licence describes the conditions the medicine can be used to treat, and how the medicine can be given. The manufacturer of the medicine has to show that the medicine is safe and made to a high standard before the medicine is licenced. The use of olanzapine to help with feeling sick and vomiting is outside its license. Medicines used in palliative care are quite often used this way and there is experience and research to support this use. The person who prescribed your medicine will have carefully considered the benefits for you.

The information in this leaflet is not included in the information leaflet supplied with the medicine.

We are giving you this extra leaflet to tell you about the reason(s) why you are taking this medicine and to highlight other information. You should read both leaflets.

# What form(s) of this medicine are there and how is it usually taken?

- Olanzapine is available as an "orodispersible tablet". This is the technical name for a tablet that is placed on or under your tongue and allowed to dissolve. It is also available as a tablet that is swallowed whole with water.
- The orodispersible tablet form will usually be given to help with nausea and vomiting.
- The usual starting dose is 2.5 mg once a day at night. If you have been prescribed the 5 mg tablets, these need to be halved and the other half safely disposed of.
- The orodispersible tablets may break easily so you should handle the tablets carefully as follows:
  - 1. Keep your hands dry. Do not push the tablet out of the pocket.
  - 2. Separate one blister cell from the strip.
  - 3. Carefully peel off the backing.
  - 4. Take the tablet out of the pocket. Half the tablet. You may find it helpful to use a tablet splitter to do this; this can be bought from most pharmacies.
  - 5. If your mouth is dry, moisten it first with a little water.
  - 6. Put the half tablet in your mouth. It will dissolve directly on or underneath the tongue.





### What are the most common side effects I might experience?

You may experience side effects when you take olanzapine. The most common side effects are sleepiness and feeling dizzy or faint, especially when getting up from a lying or sitting position. Sleepiness is more likely to happen at doses of 5 mg and above. This will usually pass on its own but if it does not, tell your doctor.

Other side effects include restlessness or unusual muscle movements. If you notice this let your doctor or nurse know.

You may experience a dry mouth. Keeping your teeth and mouth clean will help, along with having regular small sips of water.

This medicine may cause constipation. A high-fibre diet and drinking fluids can help with this. If not, your doctor will be able to give you another medicine to help.

You should consult your doctor if these side effects become troublesome.

#### What other information should I know about this medicine?

Please remember to order your repeat prescription with a few days spare, to allow it to be processed.

It is important not to order more medication than you need. Even if you return them to the pharmacy in future, they cannot be reused after they have been labelled for your use and must be disposed of.

Your medication needs to be kept in a safe place out of the reach of children.

It is important to store your medication in the original container.

Return ALL unused medication to a pharmacy.

If for any reason a you or your carer are UNABLE to go to the pharmacy, medication can be disposed of at home. However, it is important NOT to flush it down the toilet as this pollutes the water. Medication can be disposed of in a general waste bin, ensuring that cannot be accessed by children or animals, although disposal at a pharmacy is preferable.

#### Alcohol

It is best to avoid alcohol as it may make you feel very sleepy.

## **Driving**

There is a risk of feeling drowsy when you take olanzapine tablets. If this happens do not drive. You should also not operate any machinery if you feel drowsy.

https://www.gov.scot/publications/drug-driving-rules-promotional-material

# Any other important information?





Olanzapine can be an effective anti-sickness medication, but it may not help with all types of nausea and vomiting. Other treatments may be needed and can be discussed with your doctor or nurse.

Tell the doctor if you or someone else in your family has a history of blood clots, as medicines like these have been associated with the formation of blood clots.

Olanzapine tablets should not be taken if you have been previously diagnosed with eye problems, such as certain kinds of glaucoma (increased pressure in the eye). Tell your doctor if you have glaucoma.

If you have Parkinson's disease (a condition in which parts of the brain become progressively damaged over many years) olanzapine tablets may worsen your symptoms. Tell your doctor if you have Parkinson's disease.

Olanzapine orodispersible tablets contain aspartame, which is a source of phenylalanine This may be harmful for people with phenylketonuria (a rare condition where people can't break down phenylalanine). Tell your doctor if you have phenylketonuria.

Issue Date: 01/04/2024 Review Date: 01/04/2027

