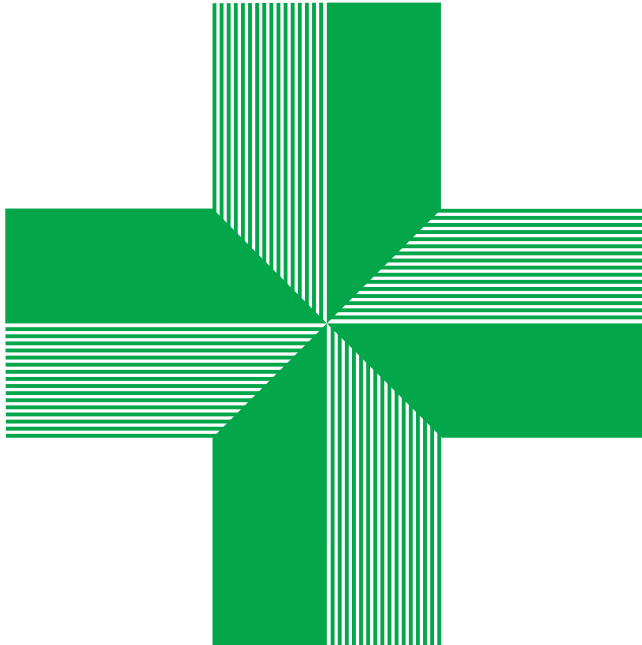


Controlled drugs – Information about your medicines

Pharmacy Department



Patient information leaflet

This leaflet relates to the following medicines that you have been prescribed:

Generic name	Brand name

These medicines are categorised as controlled drugs (CDs).

Controlled drugs are medicines that contain powerful ingredients and must be prescribed, dispensed, stored and destroyed in a specific way in order to comply with the law.

This leaflet includes important information you need to know about your controlled drugs and additional information you should have been given about your treatment.

Just like other medicines, CDs come in many different forms

- **Tablets, capsules or liquids** to be taken by mouth.
- **Medicated patches** to put on your skin.
- **Injections** to be given by your doctor or nurse.
- **Lozenges** to be sucked and dissolved in your mouth.
- **Nasal sprays** to be sprayed into the nose.
- **Suppositories** to be inserted into your bottom.

You should know

- Why your medicine(s) has been prescribed for you.
- How long it will take for your medicine(s) to work after you take it.
- How long you are likely to need to use your medication.
- When to use your medicine(s).
If you have more than one type of the same medicine, for example immediate (fast acting) and modified release (long acting), you should know when to use each one.
- How much of your medicine(s) you need to take.
- How the medicine may affect your ability to drive.
- How to dispose of your used medication or medication you no longer need.

Possible side effects of your CDs

- Nausea – Feeling sick.
- Constipation – Unable to go to the toilet as often as usual.
- Drowsiness/inability to concentrate.
If you feel drowsy, do not drive or operate heavy equipment or machinery. Ask somebody else to do this for you.

These side effects are common. If you have any questions about your medicine(s) or experience any side effects, speak to your doctor, nurse or pharmacist as soon as possible.

Taking your medicines correctly

Follow the directions on the label to make sure you take the correct dose of medication (right volume or number of tablets/sprays/suppositories).

- **Liquid medicines** – measure doses using a measuring cup, oral syringe or spoon, **never take a ‘swig from the bottle’**.
- **Medicated patches** – remove the old patch before applying a new one. **Do not expose applied patches to extreme heat** such as an electric blanket, hot water bottle, hot bath or shower and do not sunbathe or use saunas because too much medicine may be released.

NEVER share your medicines with anybody else, as they can be harmful if used by other people who they are not meant for.

Speak to your doctor if you would like to stop taking your CD(s) or if you would like to find out about alternative treatments.

Do not stop medication suddenly as you may experience withdrawal which can make you unwell.

Storing your medicines

- Store all medicines in their original container with the correct label on them.
- Make sure that medicine containers are closed and you do not have loose medicines lying around.
- Store all medicines out of the reach and sight of children.
- Ensure your medicines are safe and secure and somewhere that you or your carer can easily find them.
- Protect your medicines from direct sunlight, heat and moisture.

You should store your CDs securely to prevent them being used by other people. If you suspect that somebody else is using your medicines, or that they have been stolen, inform a doctor, nurse or pharmacist as soon as possible.

Obtaining your medicine

When you are given a prescription for your controlled drug, it is a good idea to telephone your pharmacy to make sure they have the medicine you need in stock.

When you get a new supply of your CD(s) check the name and strength of each medicine. Speak with your pharmacist if you have any questions or concerns.

You may need to provide proof of identity when collecting your medicines. Photo ID is usually best (driving licence), but a bank card would be ok.

If you can't pick up your CDs yourself, tell your pharmacist. If somebody else will be collecting your medicine(s), agree this with the pharmacist and the person collecting. The person collecting your medicines must bring proof of their identity so the pharmacist can record who collected the medicine.

Know which medicines you take

It is important to tell doctors, nurses and pharmacists which medicines you are taking. This includes controlled drugs (CDs). Always keep a list of your current medication and take this to all health-related appointments.

If you are admitted to hospital or to a hospice, take all of your medicines with you (in original containers with correct labels on). Staff will need to know how you use each of your medicines and if you have had any side effects from them.

When your medicines are no longer required

Controlled drugs, as with all medicines, need to be disposed of in a safe way. All unused medicines should be returned to your community pharmacy for safe disposal. If you are unable to take the medicines to the nearest pharmacy yourself, a relative, friend, neighbour or carer can do this for you. You do not have to return your CDs to the same pharmacy you collected them from.

Seeking advice

If you are planning a holiday abroad, speak to your doctor for advice on how to take your CDs with you.

If you have taken more than the prescribed dose or somebody else has taken your medicine, contact your pharmacist, doctor or local accident & emergency (A&E) department immediately for advice.

- **111** is the NHS non-emergency number. It's fast, easy and free. You can speak to a highly trained adviser, supported by healthcare professionals. (Available 24 hours).
- **In an emergency, dial 999 for an ambulance.**
- If an ambulance has been called, remember to give any medicines (and their containers) that have been taken to the paramedic, nurse or doctor.

If you require further information

NHS Choices Website – What is a controlled medicine (drug)?

- www.nhs.uk/chq/Pages/1391.aspx?CategoryID=73

Please contact the pharmacy who dispensed your medication for further advice, details of which can be found on your dispensing label.

References

This leaflet has been produced by the Pharmacy Risk department, Royal Surrey County Hospital and approved by the Royal Surrey County Hospital Medicines Safety Group. It has been adapted from the Controlled Drugs Patient Information Leaflet produced by the Local Intelligence Network in December 2016.

Contact details

Medicines Information Department

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Portsmouth Road
Frimley
GU16 7UJ

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Email: fhft.medicines.information@nhs.net

PALS and Advocacy contact details

Contact details of independent advocacy services can be provided by our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) who are located on the right hand side as you enter the main reception area. PALS are also your first point of contact for health related issues, questions or concerns surrounding RSCH patient services.

Telephone: 01483 402757

Email: rsc-tr.pals@nhs.net

Opening hours: 9.00am–3.00pm, Monday to Friday

If you would like information documents in large print, on tape or in another language or form please contact PALS.

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