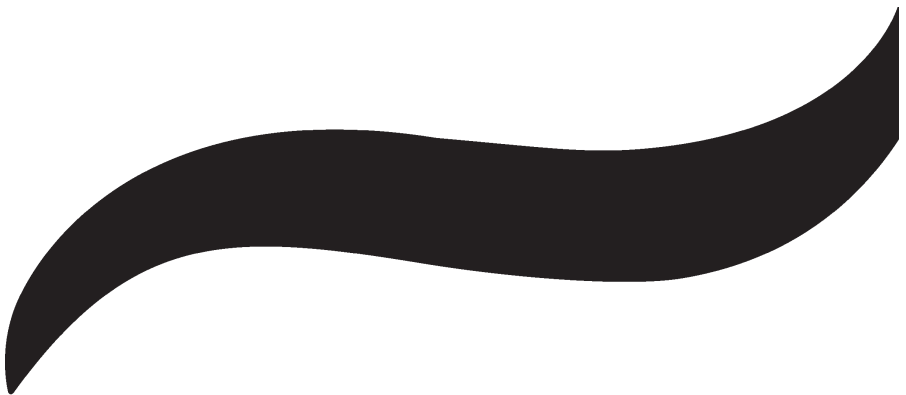




# Taking Regular Paracetamol with Tramadol

Information for patients  
Prescribing Management Team  
Kirklands



## **THE IMPORTANCE OF TAKING REGULAR PARACETAMOL**

Paracetamol is a good pain relief medicine. It is important to take paracetamol regularly. The maximum dose is two tablets four times daily. This will give the best pain relieving effect.

Spreading the doses of the paracetamol evenly during the day will help your pain the most. For example:

Two paracetamol 500mg tablets every four to six hours at 8am, 1pm, 6pm and 10pm.

Some people prefer to 'keep' a dose for during the night.

So that might be, two paracetamol 500mg tablets every four to six hours at 8am, 2pm, 8pm and then two tablets at some point during the night.

## **COMBINING TRAMADOL AND PARACETAMOL**

Paracetamol is often used with stronger pain medicine (analgesics) such as tramadol. This gives extra pain relief when required. Taking paracetamol regularly with tramadol may allow you to reduce your daily dose of tramadol. You can then increase the dose of tramadol for a few days when your pain is worse. The maximum dose of tramadol is 400mg daily.

Tramadol should not be taken with other opioids. For example morphine, codeine or paracetamol combination tablets (co-codamol or co-dydramol). If you are taking another opioid based medicine along with tramadol speak to your doctor, pharmacist or pain specialist.

## **REDUCING YOUR TRAMADOL**

It is important not to stop taking your tramadol suddenly. This can cause withdrawal symptoms for a few days. Reducing your tramadol slowly means this is unlikely.

It is important to choose the right time to begin reducing your medicine. This should be when you do not have stresses in your life and when your pain is stable.

Your dose of tramadol can be stepped up and down depending on your pain. This helps you get the most benefit from your tramadol and reduces the chance of you becoming less responsive to it, developing side effects or dependence developing.

## **HOW YOU COULD REDUCE YOUR TRAMADOL**

If you take tramadol 50mg two capsules four times a day, you could try reducing to tramadol 50mg capsules:

- ❖ two in the morning
- ❖ two and at lunchtime
- ❖ one at teatime
- ❖ two at night

If you take tramadol 50mg one capsule four times a day you could try reducing to tramadol 50mg one capsule three times a day. Only you know when your pain tends to be worse. It would be best to reduce the first dose at the time of day when your pain is at its best.

Continue by reducing slowly by one tramadol 50mg capsule every month. You can reduce more slowly than this too.

## HOW YOU COULD INCREASE YOUR TRAMADOL ON DAYS WHEN YOUR PAIN IS WORSE

Do not take more than your prescribed dose.

If you take paracetamol 500mg two tablets four times a day and tramadol 50mg one capsule each morning and night, you could increase your tramadol to one capsule three or four times a day on days when your pain is worse.

If you take paracetamol 500mg two tablets four times a day and tramadol 50mg one capsule four times a day, you could increase your tramadol gradually up to two capsules four times a day on days when your pain is worse.

Once your pain has improved, the tramadol dose should be gradually reduced back down to your previous lower dose.

**If tramadol makes you feel sleepy you should avoid driving or operating machinery. It is a criminal offence to drive a vehicle whilst unsafe due to medication use.**

## MEDICINE IN CHRONIC PAIN

The benefit from taking medicine should always be more than any side-effects you may have. Only you

- ❖ know how bad your pain is
- ❖ are able to say if your medicine is helping
- ❖ know what side effects you are having

Getting the best effect from your medication may be a matter of trial and error. It may help to keep a diary of your pain and other symptoms. Side effects often become less once you have been on a medicine for a few days. It may be several days or weeks before you notice that a new medicine is making a difference.

Please read the patient information sheet given with each medication. It will give you more information about the medicine and any side effects.

You can discuss your pain medication with your doctor, pharmacist or pain specialist. They can give you advice on which pain medicines may help and they can help you find the best way to take your medicines. They can advise you on putting your dose up safely if your pain is worse and on taking less medication safely when your pain is less.

If your medicine is not helping you may not need to take it. Please talk to your doctor or pharmacist before stopping as some pain medicines should not be stopped suddenly.

Do not share or take other peoples medication. Always advise your doctor, pharmacist or pain specialist about any other medication or products you are taking for chronic pain, including things bought from the pharmacy, herbal supplements or non- prescribed medicines.

**Understanding how your medications work will help you to get the best pain relief with the least side-effects.**

**We hope you found this information leaflet helpful.  
This information is not intended to replace your Doctor's advice. If you have any comments about the content, please let us know. This can be done by filling in the comment section, and sending it to the Prescribing Management Team at the address listed below, or by email.**

Prescribing Management Team  
Kirklands Hospital  
Fallside Road  
Bothwell  
G71 8BB  
[prescribing@lanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:prescribing@lanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk)



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