

Information for adult patients using Topiramate in the prevention of migraine headaches

Developed and reviewed by Dr Anne Coker

Developed: 09/2011 Review: 09/2013 LN0625 

Neurology Services

The aim of this leaflet is to give you information about using Topiramate in the prevention of migraine headaches.

Suggested Dosage

Migraine prevention in adults: initially 25mg daily at night for 1 or 2 weeks then increase the daily dose by 25mg per week or fortnight to a maintenance dose of 50 – 100 mg daily in 2 divided doses. Benefits of Topiramate are likely to take several weeks to become evident.

The smallest effective dose should be used and continued for 6 months before gradual withdrawal of the drug.

Side effects

As with all medications, there are potential side effects in a small number of patients. The most often reported effects are: tiredness, dizziness, pins and needles in the fingers and toes, nausea, diarrhoea, indigestion, weight loss, decrease in appetite, drowsiness, forgetfulness, difficulty with concentration or attention, word finding difficulties, difficulty in sleeping, anxiety, depression, changes in taste and less commonly blood disorders. There is a small increased risk of kidney stones and this risk may be reduced by drinking more water/juice.

Rarely, sudden blurring of vision, pain and redness of the eyes can occur, typically during the first month of starting Topiramate. This can indicate raised pressure within the eye (glaucoma). You should contact your doctor urgently if you develop these eye symptoms. It is sensible not to drive if side effects such as dizziness or drowsiness occur. Alcohol consumption may make some of these side effects more pronounced.

Interactions

- Topiramate interacts with hormonal contraception including the combined oral contraceptive pill (seek medical advice if you are using this as a means of contraception).
- Topiramate interferes with the action of the progesterone only pill and progesterone implant (such as Implanon) and these methods will not provide effective contraception during Topiramate therapy.
- The contraceptive action of Mirena and the IUD are not affected by Topiramate.

Do not take Topiramate if:

Topiramate should not be used in patients who have a history of glaucoma or kidney stones and should be used with caution in individuals with a history of depression. Women of child-bearing age should be aware that Topiramate is not advisable for migraine prevention during breastfeeding or when trying for a baby or during pregnancy.

* This leaflet is intended to provide a brief overview of aspects of this treatment protocol. It is not intended as a substitute for the comprehensive 'product information' leaflet found inside all boxes of medication. The 'product information' leaflet should always be read before taking medication.