

*Although this medication is widely used by headache specialists in the treatment of Cluster headaches and there is a good amount of experience with it, it should be noted that Verapamil is not licensed for use in headache.

Verapamil should be avoided during pregnancy.

This leaflet should be read in conjunction with the product characteristic leaflet that can be found inside all boxes of medication.

Information for adult patients using Verapamil for cluster headaches

Developed and reviewed by Dr Anne Coker

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Neurology Services

Verapamil is used to prevent the cluster headache attacks from occurring.

As Verapamil can cause slowing of the heart, the dose has to be increased gradually as given below, and an ECG needs to be performed before each increase. Increase the dose only if advised by your general practitioner or neurologist.

If you start to get any side effects please let your general practitioner or hospital doctor know as soon as possible.

	Morning	Midday	Evening
Arrange to have an ECG performed. If the ECG is normal, then:			
For 2 weeks	80mg	80mg	80mg
Arrange to have an ECG performed. If the ECG is normal, continue on this dose if your symptoms are controlled but if your symptoms are not controlled on the above dose, then:			
For 2 weeks	80mg	80mg	160mg
Arrange to have an ECG performed. If the ECG is normal, continue on this dose if your symptoms are controlled but if your symptoms are not controlled on the above dose, then:			
For 2 weeks	160mg	80mg	160mg
Arrange to have an ECG performed. If the ECG is normal, continue on this dose if your symptoms are controlled but if your symptoms are not controlled on the above dose, then:			

For 2 weeks	160mg	160mg	160mg
Arrange to have an ECG performed. If the ECG is normal, continue on this dose if your symptoms are controlled but if your symptoms are not controlled on the above dose, then:			
For 2 weeks	160mg	160mg	240mg
Arrange to have an ECG performed. If the ECG is normal, continue on this dose if your symptoms are controlled but if your symptoms are not controlled on the above dose, then:			
For 2 weeks	240mg	160mg	240mg
Arrange to have an ECG performed. If the ECG is normal, continue on this dose if your symptoms are controlled but if your symptoms are not controlled on the above dose, then:			
Increase to	240mg	240mg	240mg
After 2 weeks, arrange to have an ECG performed.			

The smallest effective dose should be used.

- Occasionally higher doses are required.
- It is reasonable to gradually discontinue therapy after 6 months to see if the headaches have resolved.
- If you need to take Verapamil for a long period of time then once you are on a stable dose your ECG should be checked after 2 weeks, then every 3 to 6 months.
- **Beta Blockers should never be taken while you are on Verapamil therapy.**