

# Diuretics (water tablets)

## Information for Patients

**Diuretics is the name given to a group of medicines.  
The name of your diuretic is**

.....

### ***Why has my doctor given me a diuretic?***

Diuretics can be used for many different illnesses.

They can be used to treat water retention, high blood pressure or to help a weak heart (a condition known as heart failure).

Check with your doctor if you are still not sure why you need a diuretic.

### ***How do they work?***

Diuretics are used to remove excess water from the body. They may make you pass more water and you may find that you have to go to the toilet more often. By removing excess water they can reduce blood pressure. They can help to reduce symptoms of heart failure by removing fluid from the lungs making breathing easier and reducing ankle swelling.

### ***How should I take my diuretic?***

Always follow the instructions on the label. These medicines are usually taken in the morning. If you have been asked to take them twice a day take the second dose early in the afternoon. Avoid taking them at night otherwise you may have to wake up to go to the toilet. Don't alter the amount of fluid that you normally drink while taking this medicine (a normal amount is approximately 2.5 to 3.5pints (or 1.5 to 2litres) of fluid per day.

### ***What should I do if I miss a dose?***

Take it as soon as you remember. If it is nearly time for the next dose, do not take the one you missed. Take the next dose at the usual time. Do not double up the next dose.

### ***What are the side effects of diuretics?***

All drugs have side effects but most people will not experience them.

The following can occur in some people:-

- nausea
- dizziness
- rash
- muscle cramps

Some diuretics can remove too much potassium (a type of salt) from your body. Your doctor can check this with blood tests. If this happens to you, your doctor may change your diuretic to one that stops you losing potassium or may give you potassium tablets.

Diuretics may make gout and diabetes worse. If you are diabetic, take extra care to check the sugar levels in your blood or urine. If your sugar levels are higher than usual, see your doctor as soon as you can.

### ***Can I take other medicines while taking diuretics?***

Yes, but some other medicines may affect how diuretics work. It is important that you check with your doctor or pharmacist before taking any other medicines including ones that you buy over the counter. Avoid buying salt substitutes instead of ordinary table salt.

This leaflet is not intended as a substitute for any advice that your doctor, nurse or pharmacist may give you.

More detailed information can be obtained from the manufacturers information leaflet.

Pharmaceutical Service	August 2016
Review date	August 2020

If you require a copy of this leaflet in any other language or format please contact us quoting the leaflet code and the language or format you require.