

Patient Information Leaflet

Lorazepam

Name of the medicine:

Lorazepam 1mg Tablets (Genus, PVL, Teva Brand)

The information given in this leaflet should be read along with any patient information leaflet provided by the manufacturer with your medicine

What is it for?

Lorazepam is a safe and effective medicine which is used to relieve anxiety or distress, which may feel worse if you are short of breath.

Most medicines available in the UK have a licence for use. The licence describes the ways in which the medicine can be given and the conditions it can be used to treat. In order to get a licence, the manufacturer of the medicine has to show that it is safe and made to a high standard.

Use of lorazepam in the way you have been told to take it is outside its licence. Medicines used in palliative care are quite often used this way. There is experience and research to support the use of lorazepam in this way. The person who prescribed your medicine will have considered carefully the benefits for you.

We are providing you with this extra information to tell you the reason(s) why you are taking this medicine and to highlight other information. You should read this and the manufacturer's patient information leaflet together.

What form(s) of this medicine are there and how is it usually taken?

This medicine is available as a tablet. The dose prescribed may be between 0.5mg or 500 microgram (half a 1mg tablet) to 1mg (one 1mg tablet). If the dose you have been prescribed is half a tablet, there should be a score line down the middle of the tablet which will make it easier for you to half. When this medicine is started at first it will usually be taken only when you need it (as required). The effects of lorazepam usually lasts for about eight hours. The maximum number of doses that you can take is 4 doses in 24 hours. Follow the information on what dose to take and how often which will be on the medicine label and will be explained to you.

The dose you have been prescribed is usually placed under your tongue, this way of taking a medicine is called sublingual. The medicine can get into your body easily from the soft tissue in your mouth. Before placing under your tongue you may need to take a sip of water, to make sure that your mouth is moist. This will make it easier for the tablet to dissolve. The tablet should be kept under your tongue until it has fully dissolved. You will usually feel the effects of the lorazepam after 10 to 20 minutes.



What are the most common side effects I might experience?

Drowsiness

Lorazepam may make you feel drowsy (sleepy) shortly after you take it. Because of this you should rest for a while in a comfortable chair or bed after you take it. You may be more likely to feel drowsy if you are also taking other medicines that can also cause sleepiness. Drinking alcohol, may also make these side-effects feel worse.

Dizziness

You may feel slightly lightheaded or dizzy after you take lorazepam, if you do experience this it should pass on its own. If it does not tell your doctor, nurse or pharmacist.

Dry Mouth

This may often be helped by:

- Frequent sips of cool drinks
- Sucking pieces of crushed ice or ice lollies (sugar free)
- Sucking sugar-free fruit pastilles
- Chewing sugar-free chewing gum
- Applying a water soluble moisturiser to lips to prevent drying and cracking

What other information should I know about this medicine?

What should I do if I can't half my tablet?

If your tablet has not got a score (line down the middle of the tablet) or if you or your relative are struggling to half your tablet discuss this with your local pharmacy who will be able to help.

What if I swallow the tablet instead of placing under my tongue?

The tablets can be swallowed instead of placing under your tongue, but it will take a little longer for the lorazepam to get into your body to have the same effect.

What should I do if I still get breathless while taking lorazepam?

Anxiety and distress can make feelings of breathlessness worse, lorazepam is good at relieving these symptoms. You may have been given another medicine to also help for shortness of breath. You may find breathing and relaxation techniques helpful <https://www.nhsinform.scot/care-support-and-rights/palliative-care/symptom-control/coping-with-breathlessness>

Can I drive?

You should not drive after starting lorazepam until you have discussed driving with your healthcare professional. There is a risk of feeling drowsy when you start taking this medicine and if your dose is increased, it may affect your ability to drive safely. If this happens, do not drive. You should also not use any machinery if you feel drowsy. For further information, please refer to the information leaflet provided via the link <https://www.gov.scot/publications/drug-driving-rules-promotional-material>

Can I drink alcohol?

It is best to avoid taking more than a small glass of wine, beer, sherry or whisky as you may become too drowsy.

General points about medication

1. Always tell the healthcare professional who prescribes a new medication about any other medication you are taking.
2. Store medication out of the reach and sight of children and out of the sunlight. It needs to be stored in the original container(s).
3. Check with the healthcare professional who prescribes a new medicine on how you get further supplies and repeat prescriptions if appropriate.
4. Return unused medication to a pharmacy.

Discuss the leaflet with your doctor, nurse or pharmacist who will answer any questions you may have.

Contact telephone numbers for staff who can provide more information on medicines or if you want to check on any concerns about side-effects:

Name:

Role:

Contact telephone number:

Name:

Role:

Contact telephone number:

Name:

Role:

Contact telephone number: