Starting dose

Follow these instructions when first starting Nortriptyline. By slowly increasing the dose over a month, you are less likely to experience side-effects. If you have any problems at any time, drop back to the previous dose and continue with that dose (without increasing it any further).

If you achieve pain relief at a lower dose (e.g. 10mg or 20mg), you can continue taking the lower dose. You don't have to increase the dose any further.

Initial Dose Increase	Dose (once before bedtime)
Week 1 & 2	10mg
Week 3 & 4	20mg
Month 2	30mg
Month 3	40mg
Note. Consult your GP for further dose increases.	

Remember to ensure you have enough medication especially coming up to weekends or public holidays. Should you wish to ask any further questions about your medication, please speak to your GP, community nurse or pharmacist.

We are listening - how did we do?

We welcome your feedback as it helps us evaluate the services we provide. If you would like to tell us about your experience:

- speak to a member of staff
- visit our website www.wihb.scot.nhs.uk/feedback or share your story at: www.careopinion.org.uk or 0800 122 31 35
- Tel. 01851 704704 (ext 2408) on a Tuesday and Friday afternoon between 1pm and 4pm.

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Disclaimer

The content of this leaflet is intended to augment, not replace, information provided by your clinician. It is not intended nor implied to be a substitute for professional medical advice. Reading this information does not create or replace a doctor-patient relationship or consultation. If required, please contact your doctor or other health care provider to assist you to interpret any of this information, or in applying the information to your individual needs.

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Bòrd SSN nan Eilean Siar
NHS Western Isles

Nortriptyline

Western Isles Pain Management Service



A patient information guide

The information in this leaflet is to guide your use of Nortriptyline safely. Further information is available inside the medication packaging.

What is Nortriptyline used for?

Nortriptyline is a medicine which helps improve your pain control. It is different from other pain relievers. It is especially good for nerve pain e.g. shooting pains or burning pains.

Nortriptyline was previously used for treating depression, but you have been prescribed it to improve your pain control.

How should I take Nortriptyline?

Please take Nortriptyline as per the chart on the reverse of this leaflet. The chart will help you begin taking the medicine. Do not stop taking this medicine without advice from your GP.

Once the pain has improved to an acceptable level, continue to take Nortriptyline at a dose you have reached.

Nortriptyline can be taken with or without food. If you are taking any indigestion remedies, leave two hours between taking these and your Nortriptyline. Swallow the capsule with a drink of water.

Are there any side-effects?

All medicines can sometimes cause side-effects. The most common side-effects of this drug are: drowsiness, dizziness dry mouth, constipation, problems passing urine, blurred vision, weight gain, fast heart rate and mood changes.

A detailed list of side-effects is also available inside the medication packaging. If you are at all worried, please talk to your GP, community nurse or pharmacist.

What if I forget a dose?

If you forget to take your tablets, just wait until its time to take your next dose. **DO NOT** take double your dose.

How to manage side-effects

If you experience dry mouth, simply drink more non-alcoholic drinks. Most side-effects will improve after several days so it it worth continuing with Nortriptyline.

If you develop yellowing of the skin or eyes, a fever, or tenderness around the middle of your stomach, you should tell your GP immediately.

Can I drive?

Drowsiness is a common side effect of this drug. If you are drowsy, you **MUST NOT** drive or operate machinery.

Can I drink alcohol?

Drinking alcohol may make you feel more drowsy. You should avoid alcohol or restrict your alcohol intake to 1-2 units per day.

Remember 1 unit = ½ pint beer/lager or a small glass of wine.

Can I take Nortriptyline long-term?

You will probably need to take this medication for as long as you have pain. If other treatments or painkillers help to reduce your pain, the dose of Nortriptyline may be reduced.

Pregnancy and breastfeeding

If planning a pregnancy or breast feeding discuss this with your GP, community nurse or pharmacist before starting to take this medication.

Do not stop taking Nortriptyline suddenly as it needs to be reduced gradually over 4 weeks.

You must discuss this with your GP before reducing or stopping the medication.