

Department of Cardiology/Pharmacy

Nifedipine

Action

Nifedipine is used to treat many problems. It:

- Helps to control high blood pressure.
- helps to stop you from getting angina attacks.

Angina is a pain in your chest which you get when your heart does not get enough oxygen.

- Also used for a condition called Raynaud's phenomenon which causes discolouration (often whitening) of the fingers and toes. For Reynaud's phenomenon, nifedipine works by relaxing and expanding the blood vessels in the fingers and toes. This helps ensure a good blood supply.

Taking your nifedipine

Nifedipine may come in the form of a tablet or a capsule. Once your doctor has chosen the type of nifedipine you should take, it is important always to keep to the same type. Check the brand name of your medicine carefully each time you get a new supply. Nifedipine is taken either once a day or twice a day. Do not crush or chew the tablets/capsules but swallow them whole with some water. Try to take the doses at about the same time each day. Do not stop taking nifedipine unless your doctor tells you to.

Remember: You can take glyceryl trinitrate (GTN) if you get a sudden attack of chest pain.

Problems to watch for

- Nifedipine can have side effects such as:-
 - Headache.
 - Getting a flushed and red face.
 - Feeling dizzy or sick.
 - Feeling tired.

These effects usually settle and go away after the first few days.

- Nifedipine can cause other side effects, such as the ones below. If these occur tell your doctor:
 - Swollen gums.
 - Muscle pains or weak muscles.
 - A skin rash.
 - Swollen ankles.
 - Constipation or diarrhoea.
- Nifedipine can sometimes make chest pain worse instead of better. Tell your doctor straight away if your chest pain gets worse.
- Women who are pregnant or breast-feeding should talk to the doctor before taking nifedipine. The doctor will want to discuss the risks and benefits with you.
- Grapefruit juice can increase the effects of nifedipine. Avoid having grapefruit juice at the same time of day as your dose of nifedipine.
- Tell your doctor if you notice any strange effects from taking your nifedipine.



We are currently working towards a smoke-free site. Smoking is only permitted in the designated smoking areas.

For advice and support in quitting, contact your GP or the free NHS Stop Smoking helpline on 0800 169 0 169

Help with this leaflet:



If you would like this information in another language, large print or audio format, please ask the department to contact Patient Information: 01223 216032 or

patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk



Document history

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Department	Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, Hills Road, Cambridge, CB2 0QQ www.cuh.org.uk
Contact number	01223 245151
Publish/Review date	March 2011/March 2014 (no changes made)
File name	Nifedipine .doc
Version number/Ref	3/PIN1609