

## Department of Nephrology/Pharmacy

# Paricalcitol capsules (Zemplar®)

### What are paricalcitol capsules and what do they do?

Paricalcitol is one of a group of medicines called vitamin D analogues which control the levels of calcium and phosphate in your body. They are used in conditions where there is a disturbance in the body's calcium levels, for example in kidney disorders where they are used to manage changes in the bones caused by kidney failure.

Paricalcitol is a form of vitamin D. It is given to increase your blood calcium level and keep it normal. It helps when your kidney can no longer produce vitamin D itself.

In addition to paricalcitol many patients will also be prescribed phosphate binder (for example Calcichew®, Renagel®) to ensure that your phosphate and calcium levels are well controlled.

### Why am I prescribed paricalcitol capsules?

When your kidneys can no longer control vitamin D themselves, the parathyroid hormone (PTH) and calcium levels in your body are affected. Paricalcitol helps to keep these levels normal and prevent long term complications such as renal bone disease.

It is likely that you have been prescribed alfacalcidol, a similar drug to paricalcitol before, but your doctor has decided to prescribe you Paricalcitol instead as this may help to control your calcium and parathyroid hormone (PTH) levels more effectively.

### How do I take my paricalcitol capsules?

Paricalcitol is taken **three times weekly**. Check with your doctor, pharmacist or specialist nurse to make sure you know how often you should take your capsules – the label on the box should tell you as well.

### Do I need to have any tests or be monitored because I am taking paricalcitol capsules?

Your doctor will monitor your calcium and parathyroid hormone (PTH) levels regularly and may adjust your dose of paricalcitol depending on your levels.

### **Are there any side effects?**

This medicine is based on the natural active form of a vitamin and it causes no unexpected side effects. It is important however to ensure that treatment does not result in calcium levels in blood which are too high (hypercalcaemia) - your doctors will check your calcium level regularly to make sure that this does not happen.

If you are concerned that you are experiencing or have experienced a side effect that you think may have been caused by the paricalcitol capsules please contact your doctor or specialist nurse for advice.

### **Are there any problems taking paricalcitol capsules with any other medications?**

Some medicines used in the treatment of epilepsy (phenobarbitone, phenytoin, carbamazepine) reduce the levels of vitamin D in the body. If you are taking any of these medications your doctor will adjust your alfacalcidol dose accordingly.

Avoid vitamin supplements which contain vitamin D, including multivitamin tablets and fish oil preparations (including cod liver oil).

Only take tablets prescribed for you by your doctor and check with your pharmacist before taking any new medicines.

### **Further information**

**Further information about your tablet can be found in the patient information leaflet found in the tablet/capsule box or on the container.**

If you have any other questions about your medication, please contact the medicines helpline on 01223 217502.



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](mailto:patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk)

### Polish

Jeżeli chciałbyś uzyskać te informacje w innym języku, w dużej czcionce lub w formacie audio, poproś pracownika oddziału o kontakt z biurem Informacji Pacjenta (Patient Information) pod numerem telefonu: 01223 216032 lub pod adresem [patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk](mailto:patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk)

### Portuguese

Se precisar desta informação noutra língua, em impressão de letras grandes ou formato áudio, por favor peça ao departamento que contacte a secção de Informação aos Doentes (Patient Information) pelo telefone 01223 216032 ou através do e-mail [patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk](mailto:patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk)

### Arabic

إذا كنت تود الحصول على هذه المعلومات بلغة أخرى، بالأحرف الكبيرة أو بشكل شريط صوتي، يمكنك أن تطلب من القسم الاتصال بمعلومات المريض على الرقم: 01223216032 أو عبر البريد الإلكتروني: [patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk](mailto:patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk)

### Cantonese

如您需以另一語言版本、特大字體或錄音形式索取本資料，請要求部門聯絡病人諮詢服務：電話 01223 216032，電郵地址 [patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk](mailto:patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk)

### Turkish

Eğer bu bilgileri başka bir dilde veya büyük baskılı veya sesli olarak isterseniz, lütfen bulunduğunuz bölümdeki görevlilere söyleyin Hasta Bilgilendirme servisini arasinlar: 01223 216032 veya [patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk](mailto:patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk)

### Urdu

اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات کسی دیگر زبان میں، بڑے الفاظ میں یا آڈیو طریقہ سے درکار ہوں تو برائے مہربانی اس شعبہ سے پیشینٹ انفارمیشن سے ذیل کے ذریعہ رابطہ کرنے کی درخواست کریں: 01223 216032 یا [patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk](mailto:patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk)

### Bengali

আপনি যদি এই তথ্য অন্য কোন ভাষায়, বড় অক্ষরে বা অডিও রেকর্ডিং পেতে চান তাহলে 'প্যাশেন্ট ইনফরমেশান' এর সঙ্গে 01223 216032 নম্বরে ফোন করে বা [patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk](mailto:patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk) ঠিকানায় ই-মেইল করে যোগাযোগ করার জন্য ডিপার্টমেন্টটিতে অনুরোধ জানান।

### Document history

Authors	Nephrology/Pharmacy Department
Department	Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, Hills Road, Cambridge, CB2 0QQ <a href="http://www.cuh.org.uk">www.cuh.org.uk</a>
Contact number	01223 217502 (Medicines Helpline)
Publish/Review date	July 2010/July 2013 (no changes made)
File name	Paricalcitrol_zemplar.doc
Version number/Ref	2/PIN1877