**Loprazolam** (say: low-praz-o-lamb)

**What is loprazolam used for?**
- Loprazolam is mainly used to help treat insomnia i.e. problems getting to sleep
- It is a benzodiazepine hypnotic
- It is available as tablets.

See our handy fact sheet on ‘Sleep Hygiene’ for some practical tips and advice on sleeping.

**What is the usual dose of loprazolam?**
- The usual dose is around 1-2mg at bedtime.

**How should I take loprazolam?**
- Swallow the tablets with at least half a glass of water whilst sitting or standing
- This is to make sure that it reaches your stomach quickly and does not stick in your throat.

**When should I take loprazolam?**
- Take your loprazolam at bedtime, probably about half an hour before you go to bed
- Loprazolam can be taken with or after food.

**What are the alternatives to loprazolam?**
- There are many other medicines (e.g. the “Z hypnotics”), talking therapies and treatments for insomnia, and the causes of insomnia.

See our “Handy chart” for insomnia to help you compare the medicines available
This will help you talk to your prescriber, nurse, pharmacist or other healthcare professional.

**How long will loprazolam take to work?**
- It usually starts to work in about an hour
- The main effect wears off in about 4-6 hours.

**How long will I need to keep taking it for?**
- Please talk to your doctor about this
- It is not a good idea to take loprazolam every night as the effect may start to wear off.

**Is loprazolam addictive and can I stop taking it suddenly?**
- If you just take it at night to help you sleep for a few weeks, it is not likely to be addictive, especially if you don’t take it every night
- If you take it regularly you could come to rely, or be dependent, on loprazolam to get to sleep

- If you have taken loprazolam regularly every night for more than about 4 to 6 weeks you could get “rebound insomnia” if you stop it suddenly
- This means that for a few days or weeks you may find it more difficult to get to sleep than before
- It is best to reduce the dose slowly over a few days or weeks
- Try to choose a time when your stress levels will be lower
- Discuss this with your prescriber, nurse, pharmacist or other healthcare professional.

See our handy fact sheet on ‘Coming off Medicines’

**What should I do if I forget to take a dose of loprazolam?**
- This is not really a problem if you can get to sleep
- You can take a dose if you are still awake but it may affect your alertness and reactions if you try to drive within 6-8 hours of a dose.

If you need to take this every day and have problems remembering ask your doctor, pharmacist or nurse about this. There are some special packs, boxes and devices that can be used to help you remember.

**Can I drink alcohol while I am taking it?**
- If you drink alcohol while taking loprazolam it may make you feel more sleepy, especially the next morning
- This is important if you need to drive or operate machinery and you must seek advice on this.

**Will loprazolam affect my other medication?**
Loprazolam has a few possible interactions with other medicines. The main ones include:
- The effect of loprazolam can be decreased by caffeine (e.g. in tea, coffee, cola drinks, some energy drinks), orlistat (Xenical®), theophylline or aminophylline (for asthma)
- You will also get more sleepiness if you take loprazolam with anything else that causes sleepiness e.g. some antihistamines, antidepressants, pain killers, antipsychotics, anticonvulsants and many other medicines.

Please see the Patient Information Leaflet (PIL) for the full possible list. Not all of these interactions happen in everyone. Some of these medicines can still be used together but you will need to follow your doctor’s instructions carefully.

http://www.choiceandmedication.org/gmmh
Will I need any blood or other tests if I am taking loprazolam?

- You should not need any extra blood tests.

Can I drive or cycle while I am taking loprazolam?

- You may feel a bit sleepy the next morning after taking loprazolam so be very careful as it may slow down your reaction times.
- Until this wears off, or you know how loprazolam affects you, do not drive or operate machinery.

What sort of side-effects might I get if I am taking loprazolam?

This table shows some of the most common side effects and any you might need to take action on. You must also see the maker’s Patient Information Leaflet for the full list of possible side effects but do not be worried by this. Some people get no side effects at all. Some side effects are the brain getting used to a medicine and these usually wear off in a few days or weeks. Starting slower may help. If you think you might have a side effect to this medicine, you should ask your prescriber, pharmacist or other healthcare professional.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Side effect</th>
<th>What happens</th>
<th>What to do about it</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>VERY COMMON</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fatigue and sleepiness during the day</td>
<td>You feel tired or drowsy, especially in the morning.</td>
<td>If you feel like this for more than a week after starting loprazolam, tell your doctor. It may be possible to reduce your dose.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dizziness</td>
<td>Feeling light-headed and faint.</td>
<td>Don’t stand up too quickly. Try and lie or sit down if you feel it coming on. Don’t drive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>COMMON</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ataxia</td>
<td>Being unsteady on your feet.</td>
<td>Discuss with your doctor when you next see him or her.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>UNCOMMON</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aggression</td>
<td>Feeling excitable. You may be talkative, intrusive, unfriendly or disinhibited.</td>
<td>Discuss this with your doctor. He or she may want to adjust your medicine or dose.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confusion</td>
<td>Your mind is all mixed up or confused.</td>
<td>Discuss with your doctor when you next see him or her. He or she may want to adjust your medicine or dose.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amnesia</td>
<td>Loss of short-term memory. Difficulty in remembering.</td>
<td>It is not dangerous. Discuss with your doctor if you are worried.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>RARE but important</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paradoxical reactions</td>
<td>Rage, anger, hallucinations, changed behaviour, sleep walking</td>
<td>See your doctor straight away. This can mean the dose is too high or does not suit you.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The small print: This leaflet is to help you understand about your medicine. You must also read the manufacturer’s Patient Information Leaflet (PIL). You may find more on the internet but beware as internet-based information is not always accurate. Do not share medicines with anyone else. The ‘Handy charts’ will help you compare the main medicines for each condition, how they work and their side effects. Go to our website for fuller answers to these and many other questions.

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