

Risperidone Consta[®] (pron. ris-perry-doa con-star)

What is risperidone used for?

Risperidone Consta (also known as Risperdal Consta[®]) is a long-acting injection mainly used to help treat the symptoms of psychosis, schizophrenia and mania, and to prevent them coming back. It is one of a group of medicines called antipsychotics or neuroleptics.

What is the usual dose of risperidone?

The usual dose of risperidone Consta[®] is 25mg, 37.5mg or 50mg every two weeks.

How will I be given risperidone Consta[®]?

The injection can be given into the muscles either in a buttock or into an arm. This is usually done every two weeks. It is best if the injection is given in a different site each time e.g. left buttock, then right buttock, then left buttock. A long-acting injection is injected into a muscle and releases risperidone slowly over a month or so. This can take the place of taking tablets every day.

What are the alternatives to risperidone?

This will depend on what you are taking it for. There are many other antipsychotics, therapies and treatments for schizophrenia, mania and psychosis. See our "Handy charts" to help you compare the medicines, how they work and their side effects.

How long will risperidone Consta[®] take to work?

Once you start the injection, the risperidone in the injection will start to be released after about four weeks. Because of this, you will need to take risperidone by mouth until the injection kicks in. It may then take a couple of weeks for the effect to start from the injection. Please look at one of the "Handy charts" for more help and advice on how long you might need to have it for before it works.

How long will I need to keep having risperidone for?

This will really depend on what you are having it for. If it is for schizophrenia, it might need to be many years to stop the symptoms coming back. Please look at one of the "Handy charts" for more help and advice on how long you might need to have it for.

Is risperidone addictive?

Risperidone is not addictive.

Can I stop having risperidone suddenly?

It is unwise to stop it suddenly, even if you feel better. Your symptoms can return if treatment is stopped too early. This may occur many months after risperidone has been stopped e.g. 3-6 months later. When the time comes, you should come off risperidone by a gradual reduction in the dose over several months. You should discuss this fully with your doctor, nurse or pharmacist.

What should I do if I forget to have an injection of risperidone Consta[®]?

Contact your nurse or doctor to fix up another injection. You may need a slightly different dose next time to make sure your symptoms do not come back.

Can I drink alcohol while I am having risperidone?

If you drink alcohol while having risperidone it may make you feel more sleepy. This is particularly important if you need to drive or operate machinery and you must seek advice on this.

Will risperidone affect my other medication?

Risperidone has only a few interactions with other medicines:

- The effects of risperidone can sometimes be increased by fluoxetine, paroxetine or itraconazole
- The effect of risperidone can be decreased by rifampicin or carbamazepine
- If risperidone is taken with benzodiazepines (e.g. diazepam, lorazepam, temazepam), or alcohol, it will cause more sleepiness.
- You should have no problems with "The Contraceptive Pill" and risperidone

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. There are many other possible drug interactions.

What sort of side-effects might occur if I am having risperidone?

The table below will show you some of the main side effects you might get from risperidone.

Side effect	What happens	What to do about it
VERY COMMON (<i>more than about 1 in 10 people might get these</i>)		
Postural hypotension	A low blood pressure - this can make you feel dizzy.	Try not to stand up too quickly. If you feel dizzy, don't drive. This dizziness is not dangerous.
Headache	When your head is painful	Ask your pharmacist if paracetamol is safe to take with any other medicines you may be taking.
Akathisia	Feeling more on edge or restless. You may sweat more.	Try and relax by taking deep breaths. Wear loose fitting clothes.
Pain where the injection is given	Pain in the muscle	A warm bath can help, as can exercise. Make sure you have the injection in a different site to the last time.
Movement disorders (extra-pyramidal side effects)	Having shaky hands. Your eyes and tongue may move on their own. You may feel very restless, or stiff.	It is not usually dangerous but is a well known side effect. If it is distressing or worries you, tell your doctor. He or she may be able to give you a medicine for it e.g. an anticholinergic.
COMMON (<i>less than about 1 in 10 people might get these</i>)		
Raised prolactin (hyper-prolactinaemia)	It can affect breasts (including milk being leaked) and irregular or no periods in women, or cause impotence and chest changes in men.	It can be very distressing. Discuss with your doctor when you next see him or her as it may possibly even affect your bones if prolactin is raised for a long time.
Sleepiness	Feeling sleepy or sluggish. It can last for a few hours after having a dose.	Don't drive or use machinery.
Weight gain	Eating more and putting on weight.	A diet full of vegetables and fibre may help prevent weight gain.
Constipation	When you want to poop but can't (the opposite of diarrhoea). You can't pass a motion.	Make sure you eat enough fibre, cereal or fruit and are drinking enough fluid, keep active and get some exercise e.g. walking. If this does not help, ask your doctor or pharmacist for a mild laxative.
UNCOMMON (<i>less than about 1 in 100 people might get these</i>)		
Blurred vision	Things look fuzzy and you can't focus your eyes properly.	Don't drive. See your doctor if you are worried.
Sexual dysfunction	Finding it hard to have an orgasm. No desire for sex.	Discuss with your doctor.
Skin rashes	Blotches seen on the skin.	Stop having it and see your doctor now.

Do not be worried by this list of side effects. Some people get no side effects at all and others may get some effects that are not listed in this table. If you think you might have a side effect to your medicine, you should ask your doctor, nurse or pharmacist. If you want to know more, go to our website for links to other websites with more information.

Will I need a blood test if I am having risperidone?

You might sometimes need to have a blood test, to check on some possible side effects e.g. prolactin levels, blood sugar etc.

Can I drive or cycle while I am having risperidone?

You may feel a bit sleepy at first when having risperidone. It may slow down your reaction times. Until this wears off, or you know how risperidone affects you, do not drive or operate machinery.

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