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LICENCEE DETAILS ARE AT THE BOTTOM OF EACH PAGE

Memantine (say: mem-Anne-teen)

What is memantine used for?

- Memantine (also called Ebixa® and Memanxa®) is mainly used to help treat the symptoms of moderate to severe Alzheimer's Disease (dementia)
- It is made as tablets.

What is the usual dose of memantine?

- The starting dose is 5mg each day
- This can then be increased slowly over 4 weeks to the usual standard dose of 20mg each day, although some people only need 10mg a day
- This can be taken as one 20mg dose or two 10mg doses.

How should I take memantine?

- Swallow the tablets with at least half a glass of water whilst sitting or standing, so they do not stick in your throat.

When should I take memantine?

- Memantine is usually taken once a day
- This is usually best at bedtime as it may make you sleepy at first
- It can be taken any time of the day, but this should be at the same time of each day.

What are the alternatives to memantine?

- There are other medicines (e.g. donepezil), therapies and treatments to help manage the symptoms of Alzheimer's Disease.

☞ See our "Handy charts" for e.g. dementia and Alzheimer's Disease to help you compare the medicines available
☞ This will help you discuss your care with your doctor, case manager or pharmacist.

How long will memantine take to work?

- Memantine should start to work in a couple of weeks or so.

How long will I need to keep taking memantine for?

- Possibly for the rest of your life.

Is memantine addictive and can I stop taking it suddenly?

- Memantine is not addictive
- You can stop taking memantine suddenly. There are no known problems
- However, the symptoms can return if treatment is stopped too early
- Discuss this fully with your doctor, case manager or pharmacist.

What should I do if I forget to take a dose of memantine at the right time?

- Take the missed dose as soon as you remember unless it is within about 10 hours of your next dose
- If you remember after this time, just take the next dose as normal
- Do not try to catch up by taking two doses at once as you may get more side-effects.

If you have problems remembering your doses (many people do) ask your pharmacist, doctor or case manager about this. Webster, other packs and Apps can help you.

Will memantine affect my other medication?

The main interactions for memantine include:

- Memantine should not usually be taken with amantadine or ketamine, and care is needed if taken with baclofen or dantrolene
- Memantine can sometimes decrease the effect of some antipsychotics
- Memantine can increase the effect of levodopa (e.g. Sinemet®, Madopar®) for Parkinson's Disease.

You **must** also see the Consumer Medicine Information (CMI) leaflet for the full list of interactions. Some of these medicines can still be used together but you must follow your doctor's instructions carefully.

Can I drink alcohol while I am taking memantine?

- If you drink alcohol while taking memantine it may make you feel more sleepy.

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Will I need any blood or other tests if I am taking memantine?

- You should not need any blood tests while you are taking memantine.

Can I drive, cycle or operate a boat while I am taking memantine?

- You may feel a bit sleepy at first so be careful as it may slow down your reaction times
- Until this wears off, or you know how it affects you, do not drive or operate machines.

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

This table shows some of the most common side effects and any you might need to take action on. You **must** also see the Consumer Information Leaflet (CMI) for the full list of possible side effects but do not be worried by this. Some people get no side effects at all. Others may get some that are not listed. Some side effects are the brain getting used to a medicine and these usually wear off in a few days or weeks. Starting at a lower dose helps. If you think you have a side effect, you should ask your doctor, pharmacist or case manager.

Side effect	What happens	What to do about it
COMMON *(fewer than about 1 in 10 people might get these)*		
Somnolence	You feel very sleepy or sluggish	Discuss with your doctor. It may be possible to adjust the dose.
Dizziness	Feeling light-headed and faint.	Stand up slowly. Lie or sit down if you feel it coming on. A change in dose may help. Discuss this with your doctor.
Constipation	Feeling "bunged up" inside. You can't pass a motion.	• Eat enough fibre, cereal or fruit • Drink enough fluid • Keep active and get some exercise e.g. walking. If this does not help, ask your prescriber for a mild laxative.
Headache	When your head is painful and pounding.	Ask your pharmacist if it is safe to take paracetamol with any other medicines you are taking.
Shortness of breath	Finding it difficult to breathe, and your chest feels tight.	This may happen if you have asthma. Contact your doctor now.
UNCOMMON *(fewer than about 1 in 100 people might get these)*		
Hallucinations	Seeing or hearing things that are not there.	Tell your doctor. It may be possible to alter the dose or change your medications.
Confusion	Your mind is mixed up more than usual.	Tell your doctor. It may be possible to alter your dose.
Vomiting	Feeling sick and being sick.	If it is bad, contact your doctor. A dose change may help.
Abnormal gait	Being wobbly, unsteady or leaning one way.	Tell your doctor. It may be possible to alter the dose or change your medication.
Tiredness	Feeling very tired.	If it is bad, contact your doctor. A dose change may help.
VTE – venous thrombo-embolism	Chest pain (worse if you breathe deeply or cough), coughing up blood, dizziness or fainting, rapid breathing, short of breath or odd heartbeat.	See your doctor straight away. The symptoms could be caused by a blood clot moving around the body.

☎ **Lifeline** provides 24hr telephone crisis support on 13 11 14 or visit www.lifeline.org.au for information & downloads

The small print: This leaflet is to help you understand more about memantine. You **must** also read the manufacturer's Consumer Medicine Information (CMI) Leaflet. You may find more on the internet but beware as internet-based information is not always accurate. Do not share medicines with anyone else.

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