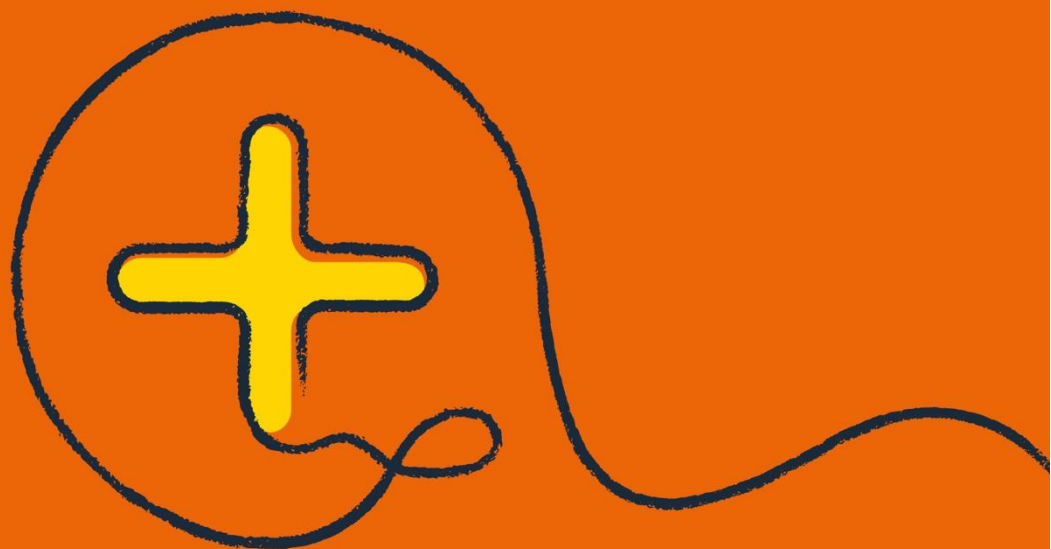


Fentanyl Transdermal Patches



Content

Information for patients and carers on using patches safely

Fentanyl transdermal patches are available in a number of different brands including Durogesic DTrans and Mezolar Matrix. Your fentanyl transdermal patches ('fentanyl TD') will normally be prescribed by the brand name.

Why have I been prescribed these patches?

- You have been prescribed patches to help with your pain relief. These adhesive patches contain a strong opioid pain medicine called fentanyl.
- There are five commonly used patch strengths. The strength you have been prescribed will depend on the dose recommended by your doctor or nurse specialist.

How do the patches work?

- After you have applied a patch to your skin, the prescribed dose of fentanyl is gradually released from the patch over 3 days, passing through your skin and into your body to help relieve your pain.

How quickly will the patches relieve my pain?

- It might take a day or so for the first patch you apply to have its maximum pain killing effect.
- Your doctor may give you other pain killers to take as well, for the first day or two after applying your first patch.
- If your pain gets worse while you are using these patches, tell your doctor or nurse. Do **not** apply an extra patch.

How do I make sure I'm using my patches safely and correctly?

- Each patch contains sufficient fentanyl to last you 3 days (72 hours) at the prescribed dose.
- You must change your patch every 3 days unless your doctor or nurse specialist gives you different instructions. If you have been prescribed more than one strength of patch to make up your dose, change all your patches at the same time.
- Always remove your old patch before applying a new one.
- Note down the day, date and time you apply a patch to remind you when to change it.
- If you develop a fever while wearing a patch speak to your doctor or nurse specialist.

How do I prepare my skin for a new patch?

- Make sure your skin is completely dry and free from soap, other cleansers, cream and talc.
- Don't apply a new patch straight after a hot bath or shower. Wait until you have cooled to your normal body temperature.
- Choose an area of skin which will be covered by loose clothing, not a tight or elasticated band.

Where do I apply a new patch?

- Apply on a flat part of your upper body or arm.
- Don't apply to sensitive, damaged, inflamed or very hairy skin.
- Apply your new patch in a different area from the patch you have just removed. Allow several days before re-using the same area of your skin for another patch.

How do I apply a new patch correctly?

- Peel one half of the sticky plaster backing away from the centre of the new patch.
- Press the sticky part of the new patch onto your chosen area of skin. Remove the other part of the backing and press the whole patch onto your skin with the palm of your hand. Keeping your hand over the patch **slowly count to 30**. The heat from your hand will help the patch stick to your skin.
- Remove your hand and check that the patch has stuck well, especially around the edges.

How do I protect my patch after application?

- If applied as described above, patches are waterproof and you can shower, bath or swim while wearing your patch.
- Avoid exposing your applied patch to direct heat such as: heat pads, hot water bottles, and lamps, and avoid excessive sunbathing, prolonged hot baths, showers or saunas.
- Don't directly scrub patches or expose them to abrasive action (for example, pressure from belts or tight clothing).

How do I remove an old patch?

- Gently peel off the old patch and fold it in half so that the sticky side of the patch sticks to itself. This will ensure that any fentanyl left in the patch is safely sealed in.
- Put your old, folded patch in the foil pouch from your new patch and return to your pharmacy or discard in a general waste bin.

What if I forget to change my patch?

- If you forget, change your patch as soon as you remember and make a note of the day and time you remembered to do this. Change this patch again after 3 days (72 hours).

What should I do if the patch falls off?

- If your patch falls off before it needs changing, stick on a new one on a different area of skin straight away and make a note of the day and time you do this.
- Change the new patch after 3 days (72 hours).
- If your patch keeps falling off, talk to your doctor, nurse or pharmacist.

What should I do if a patch accidentally sticks on another person?

- If your prescribed patch is accidentally transferred to another person's skin while in close physical contact, remove it from the person whom the patch was transferred to immediately and seek medical attention.

Can I use other medication?

- You should avoid taking clarithromycin, erythromycin, fluconazole, verapamil, diltiazem and amiodarone while you are using fentanyl TD patches. If you are already taking any of these medicines, don't stop taking them but seek medical advice.
- Your doctor may prescribe you certain other drugs such as antidepressants or anti-sickness medication. If you feel unwell while taking these with your fentanyl TD patches, let your doctor know.

If you have any other queries about using your fentanyl TD patches, please ask your doctor, nurse or pharmacist and/or refer to the leaflet in your package.

This V2 leaflet was published by St Catherine's Hospice in February 2022 and will be reviewed every two years.

If it would be helpful to have this leaflet in another format or language please call the main hospice switchboard on 01293 447333.

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