

Supplementary medicines information for palliative care patients

All medicines are supplied with a manufacturer's 'Patient Information Leaflet'. This can provide a great deal of information about the medicine, its normal uses and side effects. However, most medicines have more than one effect on the body and for many years, palliative care (hospice) doctors have found that certain medicines are safe and effective for the treatment of symptoms **other** than those specified by the medicine's manufacturer and there is now plenty of experience to confirm such use.

We are providing you with this extra information to inform you of the reason(s) why you are taking this medicine and to highlight any other information. This should be read in conjunction with the **attached** manufacturer's patient information leaflet.

Amitriptyline

In palliative care amitriptyline is sometimes prescribed for the relief of the painful sensations caused by nerve pressure. Doctors call this 'neuropathic pain'. Amitriptyline is often prescribed in addition to other commonly prescribed pain killers.

Frequently asked questions

Q. What form(s) of this medicine are there and how is it usually taken?

- Amitriptyline is available in tablet and liquid form.
- A starting dose of 10mg to 25mg at bed time is usually prescribed by your doctor to relieve neuropathic pain. The doctor will increase this dose as necessary according to your response. It may take a little while to establish the most effective dose for your pain.

NB Always follow the dose indicated on the label or advised by a healthcare professional.

Q. What are the most common side effects?

- Dry mouth.
- Difficulty in passing urine. This may be more troublesome if you have an enlarged prostate gland.
- Blurred vision and dizziness is unusual at the dose prescribed, but you should report them to your doctor if they occur.

Q. What are the main special instructions and precautions?

- Do keep taking this medicine even though the above side effects may be troublesome initially.
- Your doctor, nurse or pharmacist may advise you on mouth care if dry mouth is troublesome.
- This medicine may interfere with some anti-sickness medicines, so check this with your doctor or pharmacist.
- Do not stop taking this medicine suddenly without consulting your doctor.

Further information

If you have any questions about any of the medicines you have been prescribed or have any problems with side effects, please speak to one of the following:

St Catherine's Hospice
Telephone: 01293 447333

St. Catherine's Hospice Pharmacist
Telephone: 01293 535000