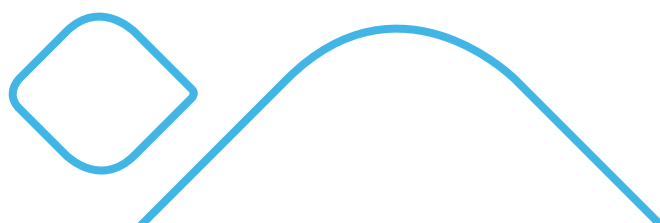


Verapamil

in Cluster Headache

Verapamil is used to prevent cluster attacks from occurring. Although it is not licensed for this indication it is used widely by headache specialists. As Verapamil can cause slowing of the heart, the dose must be increased gradually as given below, and an ECG needs to be performed before each increase. Increase the dose only if advised by your doctor. If you continue to take Verapamil your ECG should be checked every six months.

	Morning	Midday	Evening
For 2 weeks take:	80mg	80mg	80mg
	<i>Arrange to have an ECG performed - if the ECG is normal then:</i>		
For 2 weeks take:	80mg	80mg	160mg
	<i>Arrange to have an ECG performed - if the ECG is normal then:</i>		
For 2 weeks take:	80mg	160mg	160mg
	<i>Arrange to have an ECG performed - if the ECG is normal then:</i>		
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	<i>Arrange to have an ECG performed - if the ECG is normal then:</i>		
For 2 weeks take:	240mg	240mg	320mg
	<i>Arrange to have an ECG performed - if the ECG is normal then:</i>		
For 2 weeks take:	240mg	320mg	320mg
	<i>Arrange to have an ECG performed - if the ECG is normal then:</i>		
For 2 weeks take:	320mg	320mg	320mg
	<i>Arrange to have an ECG performed and if normal repeat every 6 months</i>		



Side effects and drug interaction

Side effects are listed in the product leaflet. The main problem is slowing of the heart rate. Other common side effects are constipation and swollen ankles. There are a number of other drugs that also slow the heart and should be avoided while taking verapamil, the most important being beta-blockers and digoxin.

Pregnancy and breast-feeding:

You should not take verapamil if you are pregnant, planning a pregnancy or breastfeeding.

This leaflet is intended to provide a brief overview of aspects of this treatment protocol. It is not intended as a substitute for the comprehensive 'product information' leaflet found inside all boxes of medication. The 'product information' leaflet should always be read before taking medication. **Your prescribing doctor will discuss the risks and benefits of the medication as it relates to you and answer any further questions you may have.**

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If you would like this leaflet in email form, large print, braille or another language, please contact the Patient Support and Complaints team on 01225 825656 or ruh-tr.psct@nhs.net