



# Paliperidone

(Pronounced palli-perry-dohn)

## Why has paliperidone been prescribed?

Paliperidone is an antipsychotic used to treat schizophrenia and other similar conditions. Antipsychotics are effective in reducing the symptoms of psychosis. They also shorten the time to recovery and help prevent relapses.

## What are the benefits of taking paliperidone?

Antipsychotics are effective in reducing the symptoms of psychosis. They also shorten the time to recovery and help prevent relapses.

## Are there any precautions with paliperidone?

Paliperidone is suitable for most people. As with all medicines, however, there are precautions. Your prescriber will usually check that it is safe to prescribe paliperidone, but let your prescriber know if any of the following apply to you, as extra care may be needed:

- If you have Parkinson's disease, dementia, epilepsy, diabetes or suffer from heart, kidney trouble or severe liver problems.
- If you are taking any other medication, especially medicines to lower blood pressure, antidepressants and anticonvulsants. Also, tell your prescriber if you buy any medicine 'over the counter' from a pharmacy or supermarket. Please also tell your prescriber if you take any alternative or complementary medicine such as Chinese herbal medicines.
- If you are pregnant, breast feeding, or wish to become pregnant.
- If you have lactose intolerance, the 3mg tablets contain lactose (other strengths should not cause problems).

## What is the usual dose of paliperidone?

The starting dose is usually 3mg or 6mg a day. This is sometimes increased slowly over a few days. The usual dose of Paliperidone may be between 3mg and 12mg a day. Some people may receive higher doses. It may take a few weeks to get to the dose that is most suitable.

## How should paliperidone be taken?

Paliperidone is usually taken once a day.

## What form does paliperidone come in?

Paliperidone is available as prolonged release tablets. The tablets are available as 3mg, 6mg, 9mg and 12mg.

## What should be done if a dose is missed?

If you forget a dose, take it as soon as you remember, as long as it is within a few hours of the usual time. If you miss a whole day's dose – just carry on as normal with the next day's dose. If you miss more than a day's dose, speak to your prescriber.

## What will happen when paliperidone is first taken?

Paliperidone, like many medicines, does not work straight away. For example, it may take several days or even weeks for some symptoms to improve. To begin with some people find that Paliperidone makes them feel more alert and less slowed down. Many people do not experience any side effects. However some people may experience side effects. We have listed potential side effects in the table below, whether or not they are likely to be short

or long-term and what measures can be taken is also described. We have listed potential side effects in the table below, whether or not they are likely to be short or long-term and what measures can be taken is also described. There are other possible side effects – we have listed only the most important ones. Ask your doctor, pharmacist or nurse if you are worried about anything else that you think might be a side effect. Further information on side effects is available in the official manufacturer's leaflet.

## Reporting side effects

The 'Yellow Card' scheme encourages patients to report any side effects that they feel may be caused by their medication. Ask your doctor, pharmacist, or nurse for the forms if you wish to report any side effects. Alternatively, telephone 0808 100 3352 or go to [www.mhra.gov.uk](http://www.mhra.gov.uk).

## Is paliperidone addictive?

No, paliperidone is not addictive. However, if you stop taking the medicine suddenly, you may experience unpleasant physical feelings.

## What about alcohol?

It is recommended that people receiving paliperidone should not drink alcohol. This is because both antipsychotics and alcohol can cause drowsiness. If the two are taken together, severe drowsiness can result. This can lead to falls and accidents. As well as this, drinking alcohol may make psychosis worse. However, once people are used to receiving medication, then *very small amounts* of alcohol may not be harmful. It pays to be very careful, because alcohol affects people in different ways, especially when they are receiving medication. Never drink alcohol and drive. Discuss any concerns you may have with your doctor, pharmacist or nurse.

## Is it OK to stop taking paliperidone when symptoms go away?

No. If you stop taking paliperidone your original symptoms are very likely to return. Most people need to be on paliperidone for quite a long time, sometimes years. You should always discuss any plans you have to reduce or stop any of your prescribed medicines with your prescriber.

## Are there any alternatives to paliperidone?

Yes, there are alternatives available. Overall, antipsychotics have broadly similar therapeutic effects, except for clozapine which is effective when other antipsychotics have failed. Antipsychotics differ in their side effects. With the range of medicines now available, a suitable and acceptable antipsychotic can usually be found for everyone.

## Summary of side effects



### Insomnia - Common

#### What can be done about it?

This tends to wear off. Sometimes, sleeping tablets are prescribed.



**Headache - Common**

**What can be done about it?**

This tends to wear off. Take paracetamol if necessary. Report to your prescriber if symptoms persist for more than a few days



**Agitation and anxiety – Common** (also known as akathisia)

**What can be done about it?**

This tends to wear off. Sometimes, medication for anxiety is prescribed. Treatment may be switched to another medicine which does not cause this side effect.



**Menstrual changes – Common** (women) – periods may stop

**What can be done about it?**

Any changes should be reported to the prescriber. Treatment may be switched to another medicine which does not cause this side effect



**Movement disorders – Common** (trembling, muscle spasms)

**What can be done about it?**

Another medicine may be prescribed to treat this. Treatment may be switched to another medicine which does not cause this side effect.



**Abnormal movements - Common** (also known as tardive dyskinesia)

**What can be done about it?**

This occurs only after long term treatment. It usually begins with unusual movements of the mouth and tongue. Treatment may be switched to another medicine which is less likely to cause this side effect. Symptoms may go away when switched to another medicine.

Other (less common) side effects	How common is it and what can be done about it?
Weight gain	<b>Uncommon</b> Some people put on a few pounds Try to eat healthily and take exercise.

Sexual dysfunction - reduced libido (desire) and lack of orgasm in males and females. Impotence in males	<b>Uncommon</b> Any changes should be reported to your prescriber. It may be necessary to switch to another medication. Symptoms should go away when switched to another medication.
Breast growth and milk production (men and women)	<b>Rare</b> Any changes should be reported to the prescriber. Treatment may be switched to another medicine which does not cause this side effect.
Diabetes	<b>Very rare</b> It may be necessary to switch to another medicine.

Very common = almost everyone affected  
Common = many people affected  
Uncommon = some people affected

Rare = few people affected  
Very rare = very few or no one affected

## Disclaimer

This leaflet does not replace the official manufacturer's Patient Information Leaflet.

For more information, visit [www.slam.nhs.uk/meds](http://www.slam.nhs.uk/meds) or speak to a health care professional.

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