



Paliperidone Palmitate

(Pronounced palli-parry-dohn)

(Also known as palliperidone depot and Xeplion™)

Why has paliperidone palmitate been prescribed?

Paliperidone injection is an antipsychotic used to treat schizophrenia and other similar conditions.

What are the benefits of taking paliperidone palmitate?

Antipsychotics are effective in reducing the symptoms of psychosis. They also shorten the time to recovery and help prevent relapses. The main advantage of a long-acting injection (or depot) is that there is no need to remember to take tablets daily. There is also less fluctuation in the amount of the drug in the body and as such side effects may be less severe than with the tablets or oral formulations

Are there any precautions with paliperidone palmitate?

Paliperidone injection 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 injection, 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.

What is the usual dose of paliperidone palmitate?

The first dose is usually 150mg which is followed 8 days later by a 100mg injection. After this the injection will be given monthly and the dose will be between 25-150mg. It may take a few months to get to the dose that is most suitable.

How should paliperidone palmitate be taken?

Paliperidone injection is given by intramuscular injection. This will usually be given to you by a nurse on a ward, clinic or GP surgery. The first two doses should be given in the deltoid muscle which is in the upper arm. After this the injection can be given in the gluteal muscle which is the buttocks.

This may vary slightly if you are switching from another long acting injection to paliperidone injection.

What form does paliperidone palmitate come in?

Paliperidone is available as tablets and long acting injection. The long acting injection can be used instead of taking daily tablets. The injection is available as 50mg, 75mg, 100mg and 150mg. The tablets are rarely used.

What should be done if a dose is missed?

The next injection should be given as soon as possible. This may mean making an extra appointment at the clinic or hospital.

What will happen when paliperidone palmitate is first given?

Paliperidone injection, like many medicines, does not work straight away. For example, it may take several days or even weeks for some symptoms to improve. Many people do not experience any side effects. However some people may experience some 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. 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.

Is paliperidone palmitate addictive?

No, paliperidone is not addictive.

What about alcohol?

It is recommended that people receiving paliperidone injection 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 palmitate when symptoms go away?

No. If you stop receiving paliperidone injection 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 palmitate?

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

Other (less common) side effects	How common is it and what can be done about it?
Weight gain	Uncommon 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	Uncommon 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)	Rare Any changes should be reported to the prescriber. Treatment may be switched to another medicine which does not cause this side effect.
Movement disorders trembling, muscle spasms	Rare Another medicine may be prescribed to treat this. Treatment may be switched to another medicine which does not cause this side effect.
Abnormal movements (also known as tardive dyskinesia)	Rare 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.

Diabetes	Very rare It may be necessary to switch to another medicine.
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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 or speak to a health care professional.

Leaflet supplied by: Medicines Information, Pharmacy Department, Maudsley Hospital, London SE5 8AZ | Telephone: 020 3228 2317

Artwork by: Oscar Millar (www.millarstratton.co.uk)