

# Patient information

## Sussex Pelvic Floor Service Loperamide ( Imodium)

### What is loperamide?

Loperamide is a medicine used to thicken soft or liquid stools and reduce frequency of diarrhoea or loose stools.

### How does it work?

Loperamide works by slowing down the passage of food through the bowel to allow time to the water to be absorbed by the large bowel. This will result in a more thickened stool.

### What dose do I take?

The dose of loperamide change from individual to individual. It sometimes needs some trial and error to find the dose that will thicken your stools without constipating you. It is usual to start on a low dose and build it up slowly over a few days so that you can judge how your body is responding. Loperamide comes in capsules / tablets or as syrup. As the syrup is often used for children it can only be obtained on prescription in this country.

#### Amount you take

1 capsule / tablet  
1 teaspoon (5ml)  
1 half teaspoon (2.5ml)

#### Actual dose of loperamide

2 milligrams  
1 milligram  
Half a milligram

### When loperamide should be taken?

It is best to take loperamide half an hour before a meal. This will help to slow down the usual gut activity that is stimulated by eating.

Most people find that the bowel is most active in the morning and so loperamide will help most if taken before breakfast. The medicine starts to work within half an hour of taking it and is effective for eight to 12 hours. This means that doses taken after lunch are not likely to help much if all your problems are in the morning. However, a dose last thing at night may help with early morning frequency.

Loperamide is a very safe drug which is not addictive. It can be taken in doses of up to eight capsules (16 milligrams) per day over long periods of time. Do not take more than 16 milligrams per day without medical advice. If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to ask.

### Sources of information

St Mark's Hospital

### Important information

This patient information is for guidance purposes only and is not provided to replace professional clinical advice from a qualified practitioner.

## Your comments

We are always interested to hear your views about our leaflets. If you have any comments, please contact the Patient Experience Team – Tel: 0300 131 4731 (direct dial) or by email at: [esh-tr.patientexperience@nhs.net](mailto:esh-tr.patientexperience@nhs.net)

## Hand hygiene

The trust is committed to maintaining a clean, safe environment. Hand hygiene is very important in controlling infection. Alcohol gel is widely available at the patient bedside for staff use and at the entrance of each clinical area for visitors to clean their hands before and after entering.

## Other formats

**If you require any of the Trust leaflets in alternative formats, such as large print or alternative languages, please contact the Equality and Human Rights Department.**

**Tel: 0300 131 4434 Email: [esh-tr.Accessibleinformation@nhs.net](mailto:esh-tr.Accessibleinformation@nhs.net)**

After reading this information are there any questions you would like to ask? Please list below and ask your nurse or doctor.

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## Reference

East Sussex pelvic floor service

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