



Mr Mistry may have prescribed you one or more of the following medications. Please read the patient information leaflet provided from the pharmacist for further information.

Along with their useful effects, most medicines can cause unwanted side-effects although not everyone experiences them. These usually improve as your body adjusts to the new medicine, but speak with your GP or pharmacist if side-effects continue or become troublesome.

Always let your doctor know your medical history and what medications you are taking before being prescribed a new medication. Inform your doctor if you might be pregnant, or if you have any allergies to medication.

**Paracetamol** 1g (2 tablets) Regularly every 4 hours, with a maximum of 8 tablets in 24hours. Breakfast, lunch, dinner, bedtime.

**Codeine** 30mg up to every 4 hours as required. Constipation is common.

**Paracetamol plus Codeine (ParaCode, Panadeine, etc)**

Do not take at the same time as regular Paracetamol or Codeine.

## Anti-Inflammatories

May be used on an “as required” basis, or regularly for background pain relief.

**Diclofenac SR** (Slow Release) 75mg every 12 hours, maximum twice per day

Or **Ibuprofen** 400mg every 8 hours, maximum 3 times per day

Take with food. They can irritate the stomach, so Mr Mistry may have also prescribed

**Omeprazole** 40mg once per day to protect the stomach lining.

Anti-inflammatories should be avoided if you have kidney disease; or ever had gastrointestinal bleeding or ulcers. They can worsen asthma in some people.

**Tramadol** 50-100mg every 6 hours as required, up to four times daily

Should be avoided if you have a seizure disorder. Caution if taking certain antidepressants. Common side effects include nausea, dizziness, drowsiness, constipation, or dry mouth.

**Norflex** 100mg twice daily as required to relieve muscle spasm. Should be avoided if you have glaucoma (high pressure in the eye); enlarged prostate, bladder obstruction, or intestinal obstruction. The most common side effect is a dry mouth. Tell your doctor if you notice a change in your vision, or difficulty passing urine while on this medication.

**Gabapentin** (Neurontin, Nupentin) Start at 300mg twice daily, with the first dose at bed time. Helps pain caused by irritated nerves. The most common side effects are sleepiness, dizziness, dry mouth, clumsiness or unsteadiness, and nausea. If after a week your pain relief has not improved, and you do not have significant side effects, visit your GP to discuss increasing your dose.



# PAIN RELIEF MEDICATION

## **Amitriptyline** 10mg or **Nortriptyline** 10mg at bedtime

Helps the burning, shooting or stabbing pain caused by irritated nerves. These drugs work best if taken regularly and not so well on an 'as required' basis. This is because they gradually alter chemicals in the spine and brain that are involved in registering pain messages. It can take 2 or more weeks to get the full benefit of the pain relief.

Dry mouth, constipation and sleepiness are common side effects. These usually reduce over the first few days of treatment. If sleepiness is problematic, reduce your dose to 5mg (half a tablet). You can then increase the dose back up to 10mg after a week if the sleepiness has improved.

If, after 3-4 weeks, you feel that your pain relief has not improved, and if you are not experiencing significant side effects due to this medication, you can increase the dose to 20mg at night for amitriptylline, or 25mg for nortriptylline.

### **Side-effects**

Dry mouth

Constipation

Feeling of a fast or irregular heartbeat

Feeling dizzy, faint or light-headed when getting up

Feeling sleepy, blurred vision, Clumsy, unsteady

Nausea

### **What can I do if I experience this?**

Try chewing sugar-free gum or sweets. Saliva substitutes are available from the pharmacist.

Try to eat a well-balanced diet containing plenty of fibre, and drink plenty of water. Try kiwifruit, pineapple, papaya, or "Kiwicrush" (in the frozen food section of the supermarket). Try fibre supplements such as "Benefiber" or "Metamucil"

Speak with your GP

Getting up more slowly may help. If you begin to feel faint, sit down until the feeling passes

If this happens, **do not drive** or use dangerous machines. Do not drink alcohol

Eat simple foods. Eat smaller meals but more often

**Alcohol** should be avoided with tramadol, amitriptyline, nortriptyline, norflex, codeine, and gabapentin. Use with caution with anti-inflammatories and paracetamol.

**Do not double doses** of medication, even if you missed the previous dose.