

PATIENT INFORMATION LEAFLET



MEDICINE TO TREAT: HYPERTENSION

Diuretics

1 What are Diuretics used for?

This medicine acts on the kidneys to get rid of excess water and salts in the body. This will reduce the amount of water in the body and so decreases the pressure on the walls of the blood vessels and the workload of the heart. It is also used to reduce fluids from the lungs in the management of heart failure.

2 What are the possible side effects of Diuretics?

- Because diuretics work by increasing salt loss through the kidneys, you may urinate more often and in larger amount.
- You may experience giddiness, lightheadedness, especially when you get up from a lying or sitting position. This is more likely to occur in the morning.
- You may become weak, tired, unusually thirsty, have muscle cramps or loss of appetite. These are signs of too much potassium loss.
- You may develop skin rash or become sensitive to sunlight.

3 What precautions should I take?

- Your medicine may cause you to lose potassium. If your doctor has prescribed a potassium supplement such as potassium chloride, be sure to take it with your medicine.
- If you are not taking a potassium supplement, you should increase your intake of potassium rich food. Examples of these are fresh orange juice, bananas, pineapples and raisins.

4 What are the commonly used Diuretics?

- Hydrochlorothiazide
- Frusemide