

Patient information leaflet

Fentanyl patch: 12 mcg/hr and 25 mcg/hr (Durogesic®)

Why am I using this?

Fentanyl is a strong painkiller, belonging to the opioid class. It is only used for patients who have already been taking opioids (e.g. morphine, oxycodone). Fentanyl patches are used to control moderate to severe **long-term** pain, but are not suitable for sudden and/or short-term pain.

The pharmacist will go through this list with you. You should clarify any doubts with the pharmacist.



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3



Figure 4

	Important points to note	√
1	Do not cut or divide the patch or use when it is damaged.	
2	Apply firmly to non-hairy skin (refer to Fig. 1 to 4). Hair may be cut but not shaved before application, as shaving may remove some skin and increase absorption. Do not apply to broken skin, hairy surfaces or on areas of the skin that have received recent radiotherapy. Before application, clean the skin of the desired site with clean and cool water and dry the skin completely.	
3	You may only use ONE patch at a time and it may only be left on the skin for 48-72 hours (2-3 days) unless directed otherwise by your doctor . Date the patch using a permanent marker pen with the date of application.	
4	When changing patch, remove the old one before applying the new one. You should replace patches at the same time of the day each time you replace it. Use a different site with each change. You may re-use the old site after 5 to 7 days. Wash your hands after you have finished applying the patch.	
5	Heat may increase the release of drug from the patch and hot skin may absorb the drug faster and to a larger extent. This will increase the risk of side effects. Therefore, avoid activities like saunas, use of hot water bottles, sunbathing or very hot baths, especially on the application site.	
6	You can swim or shower while you are wearing a patch. If the patch loosens, apply Micropore® tape to hold it in place. If the patch falls off before 72 hours after application, dispose of it properly (see Point 8) and put a new one on a different skin site. Do not replace the new patch until after 72 hours or as directed by your doctor. Be sure to let your doctor know that this has happened.	
7	Store unused patches at room temperature and keep out of reach of children.	
8	Patches should be folded with sticky sides together and disposed of by flushing it down the toilet . Do not allow children to come into contact with the patches, as there have been reports of children dying from accidental use of these patches! Care should be taken to avoid situations in which the patch may accidentally stick to the children (e.g. while sleeping).	
9	Avoid drinking alcohol or use of other agents which may dull your mind (e.g. sleeping tablets, unless prescribed by your doctor), while using a fentanyl patch.	
10	The medicine may affect your mental and physical ability to coordinate. Thus, do not drive or operate any machinery.	
11	Tell your doctor if you develop any allergy during the use of this medicine. Symptoms of an allergic reaction include: rash, hives, itching, shortness of breath, wheezing, cough, swelling of face, lips, tongue or throat.	

What side effects should I look out for?

- Low blood pressure, slow heart rate, inability to breathe
- Nausea and vomiting, constipation, dry mouth
- Skin irritation at the site of application
- Dizziness, drowsiness, lethargy

Some of these side effects (e.g. low blood pressure, slow heart rate, inability to breathe) may warrant immediate medical attention. Even after you have removed the patch, continue monitoring for side effects up to 24 hours after removal.

What should I monitor and feedback to the doctor?

- Is the pain better, worse, or about the same? Keep a diary of pain control. Chart your pain level from 1 to 10 according to this scale.
- Inform your doctor if your bowel movement is less often than usual.

