

INFORMATION TO PATIENTS

Commonly prescribed medications for the treatment of headache disorders

PROPRANOLOL

Introduction

The aim of this leaflet is to provide information on the use of propranolol for the prevention of migraine in children and adolescents. Further information on propranolol can be found in the patient information leaflet supplied with the tablets or from your doctor or pharmacist. Please read the information before taking medication.

What is propranolol

Propranolol is a member of a group of drugs known as Beta-Blockers. These are widely used in the treatment of heart diseases and hypertension. Propranolol is also used in the prevention of migraine in adults and also in children and adolescents. It is one of the medications that are recommended by The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE).

What is the dose of propranolol to prevent migraine?

The optimum dose of propranolol for prevention of migraine in children and adolescents is between 1-2 mg/kg/day. The dose should be increased gradually over 4-6 weeks. The usual starting dose is 20 mg twice per day and increased every 2 weeks to a maximum of 2 mg/kg/day, as necessary.

If you experience side effects, you should not increase the dose further before discussing the treatment with your doctor.

Does Propranolol have any side effects?

No tablets are without side effects in a small number of people. The main problems associated with Beta-Blockers are fatigue and coldness of the hands and feet.

They should not be used if you have asthma as they can make this condition worse.

For how long should I take them?

You need to take the medication at the optimum dose for at least 6 weeks before a benefit can be judged. If there is a benefit then they should be taken for at least 6 months after which you may like to discuss with your doctor whether you can withdraw them.

Although this medication is widely used by headache specialists and there is a large amount of experience with it, it should be noted that it is not licensed for use in headache.