

Amantadine

Information for patients and carers

Contents

Introduction	3
What is Amantadine used for?	3
How does Amantadine work in the brain?	3
What is the usual dose of Amantadine?	4
How should I take Amantadine?	4
When should I take Amantadine?	4
What are the alternatives to Amantadine?.....	4
How long will Amantadine take to work?	4
How long will I need to keep taking Amantadine?	4
Is Amantadine addictive and can I stop taking it suddenly?	5
What should I do if I forget to take a dose of Amantadine at the right time?.....	5
Will Amantadine affect my other medication?.....	5
Can I drink alcohol while I am taking Amantadine?	6
Can I drive, cycle or use machinery while I am taking Amantadine?	6
Will I need any additional physical health monitoring if I am taking Amantadine?	6
Benefits of Amantadine	6
What side-effects might I experience if I am taking Amantadine?...	6
References.....	10
What if my carer(s) or I have a comment, suggestion, compliment or complaint about this patient information sheet or my treatment with Amantadine?.....	11

Introduction

- This leaflet is to help you and/or your carer understand more about Amantadine (say: A-man-ta-dean). You **must** also read the manufacturer's Patient Information Leaflet (PIL) which is included in the medication box.
- This medication has been prescribed for you only, please do not pass it on to others, even if their signs of illness are the same as yours.
- If you are unsure about anything in this leaflet, please contact the Medicines Helpline for CNTW Service Users and Carers on 0191 245 6604 or email medinfo@cntw.nhs.uk (available 9am to 5pm).

What is Amantadine used for?

- Amantadine is licensed to treat Parkinson's Disease.
- Amantadine is often prescribed "off-label"¹, for example to treat the following when other medication has not helped:
 - Movements, rigidity, thinking and behaviour in Huntington's Disease.³
 - Fatigue in Multiple Sclerosis and brain injury.³
- It is available as capsules and an oral solution (liquid) 50mg/5ml.

¹ "Off-label" means the medication is being prescribed in a different way than that stated in its UK product license. For further information please read:

www.choiceandmedication.org/cntw/generate/handyfactsheetunlicensedusesuk.pdf ²

²Printed copy available on request

³For further information: www.hda.org.uk/

³For further information: www.mssociety.org.uk/

How does Amantadine work in the brain?

Amantadine increases dopamine levels in the brain and may also improve symptoms by affecting other neurotransmitter systems.

What is the usual dose of Amantadine?

- Amantadine is prescribed on an individual basis.
- The starting dose is 50mg-100mg in the morning.
- This dosage may be increased to a maximum of 200mg twice daily.

How should I take Amantadine?

- Capsules should be swallowed whole with a glass of water whilst sitting or standing, so they do not stick in your throat.
- Liquid contains 50mgs in every 5mls so use a medicine spoon or oral syringe to carefully measure the dose.
- Amantadine can be taken at any time in relation to food.

When should I take Amantadine?

- Amantadine is usually taken in the morning if once daily or morning and lunchtime if twice daily.
- Allow 4-6 hours between doses if twice daily.
- Amantadine is taken earlier in the day so sleep is not affected.

What are the alternatives to Amantadine?

- Depending on the reason for taking Amantadine there are other alternatives, which your prescriber can discuss with you.

How long will Amantadine take to work?

- Amantadine should start to work within two weeks.
- Discuss with your prescriber if you feel Amantadine is not improving your symptoms.

How long will I need to keep taking Amantadine?

- This should be discussed with your prescriber.
- It depends on the condition being treated. In general Amantadine is prescribed for at least 6 months and is often prescribed for long term use.

Is Amantadine addictive and can I stop taking it suddenly?

- Amantadine is not addictive.
- If you wish to stop taking Amantadine discuss this with your prescriber who will tell you how to reduce the dose gradually.
- Do not stop taking Amantadine suddenly as your symptoms may get worse.

What should I do if I forget to take a dose of Amantadine at the right time?

- Take the missed dose as soon as you remember unless it is within six hours of your next dose.
- If you remember after this, just take the next dose as normal.
- Do not take a double dose to make up for a forgotten dose.
- If you have problems remembering your doses (as many people do) see our Handy Fact Sheet “Remembering to take your medicines”(www.choiceandmedication.org/cntw/generate/handyfactsheetrememberingtotakemedicinesuk.pdf)
Printed copy available on request.

Will Amantadine affect my other medication?

- Amantadine can sometimes cause problems if taken with levodopa (e.g. Sinemet[®], Madopar[®]) or anticholinergics (e.g. procyclidine, trihexyphenidyl).
- Amantadine can sometimes decrease the effect of antipsychotics.
- Tell your prescriber or pharmacist if you are taking other medications.

You **must** also see the Patient Information Leaflet (PIL) for the full possible list. Some of these medicines can still be used together but you will need to follow your prescriber's instructions carefully.

Can I drink alcohol while I am taking Amantadine?

- It is recommended you do not drink alcohol while taking Amantadine as this can increase the risk of side effects and overdose from the medication.

Can I drive, cycle or use machinery while I am taking Amantadine?

- Taking Amantadine may make your vision blurred or make you feel dizzy. If you are affected you should not drive, cycle or use machinery.

Will I need any additional physical health monitoring if I am taking Amantadine?

- In rare cases, patients need periodic ECG monitoring. This is a test that records the electrical activity of your heart, including the rate and rhythm. It is only necessary when other conditions are present which affect the heart.
- Your prescriber will discuss with you if any physical health care checks are required, however these are not routinely necessary.

Benefits of Amantadine

Amantadine can improve movements, rigidity, thinking and behaviour in Huntington's Disease. It can also help with fatigue in patients with multiple sclerosis and brain injuries.

What side-effects might I experience if I am taking Amantadine?

As with all medication, Amantadine can cause side effects, although not everybody will have them. These side effects are often mild and may only last for a few days. If side effects are severe or last more than a few days talk to your prescriber, doctor, or pharmacist. Starting at a lower dose can help reduce initial side effects.

This table shows possible side effects and actions you may need to take. You **must** also see the manufacturer's Patient Information Leaflet (PIL) for the full list of possible side effects.

Side effect	What happens	What to do about it
Very common (more than 1 in 10 people might get these)		
Oedema	Swollen ankles.	Talk to your prescriber or pharmacist.
Livedo reticularis	A net-like pattern of reddish-blue skin discoloration. (This usually happens with high doses or if taken for many months).	Talk to your prescriber or pharmacist.
Common (less than 1 in 10 people might get these)		
Impulse control disorders	Behaviour problems such as excessive gambling, increased sex drive, compulsive spending, binge eating.	Talk to your prescriber or pharmacist. It may be possible to alter the dose or change your medications.
Constipation	Difficulty emptying your bowels, usually associated with hardened stools	Increase fluid, fruit and fibre in diet. Increase exercise and movement. May require a purchased or prescribed laxative.
Nightmares	More common when taken with anticholinergic medications or if you have an underlying psychiatric disorder.	Talk to your prescriber or pharmacist.

Decreased appetite	Less desire for food	Talk to your prescriber or pharmacist.
Nausea or vomiting	Feeling sick and being sick.	Take the dose with or after food. Talk to your prescriber or pharmacist if symptoms persist after 7 days. It may be possible to alter the dose or change your medications.
Dizziness	Feeling light-headed and faint.	Contact your doctor or nearest hospital immediately. Do not stand up too quickly. Lie or sit down if you feel dizzy. Do not drive.
Restlessness or anxiety	Feeling more on edge. You may sweat a lot more.	Try taking deep breaths. This should gradually ease off over several weeks. A lower starting dose may help. Talk to your prescriber or pharmacist if symptoms last for more than a few days.
Mood changes	Your mood feels low or high.	Talk to your prescriber. It may be possible to alter the dose or change your medications.
Insomnia	Not being able to get to sleep at bedtime.	Make sure you take your dose as prescribed. Talk to your prescriber or pharmacist if poor sleep persists.

Fatigue	Feeling tired all the time. This may happen early on in treatment and should go away.	Talk to your prescriber or pharmacist if symptoms last for more than a few days. It may be possible to adjust your dose slightly. It should usually wear off.
Myalgia	Muscle weakness.	Talk to your prescriber or pharmacist.
Somnolence	You feel very sleepy or sluggish.	Talk to your prescriber or pharmacist if symptoms last for more than a few days. It may be possible to adjust your dose.
Hyperhidrosis	Being very sweaty, hot flushes.	Talk to your prescriber or pharmacist.
Hallucinations	Seeing or hearing things that are not there.	Tell your prescriber. It may be possible to alter the dose or change your medications.
Uncommon (affects around 1 in 1,000 to 1 in 100 people)		
Blurred vision	Things you see are less sharp and clear	Talk to your prescriber or pharmacist
Rare (affects around 1 in 10,000 to 1 in 1,000 people)		
Seizure	Having a fit or convulsion.	Stop taking and contact your doctor immediately.
Urinary retention or incontinence	Problems with passing urine	Tell your doctor or pharmacist.

References

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What if my carer(s) or I have a comment, suggestion, compliment or complaint about this patient information sheet or my treatment with Amantadine?

If you or a carer(s) want to make a comment, suggestion, compliment or complaint you can:

- talk to the people directly involved in your care
- ask a member of staff for a feedback form, or complete a form on the Trust website www.cntw.nhs.uk/contact/complaints/
- telephone the Complaints Department Tel: 0191 245 6672
- email complaints@cntw.nhs.uk Please note that information sent to the Trust via email is sent at your own risk

We are always looking at ways to improve services. Your feedback allows us to monitor the quality of our services and act upon issues that you bring to our attention.

You can provide feedback in the following ways:

- the quickest way for you to do this is to complete our short online survey at www.cntw.nhs.uk/yourvoice
- complete a Your Voice survey, available on wards, reception areas or from staff
- other options for sharing your feedback and experience www.cntw.nhs.uk/yourfeedback

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS provide confidential advice and support, helping to sort out any concerns that you or your carer may have about any aspect of your care and treatment.

We act independently when handling patient and family concerns, liaising with staff, managers and, where appropriate, relevant organisations, to negotiate prompt solutions. If necessary, we can also refer patients and families to specific local or national-based support agencies.

North of Tyne and Cumbria

Tel: 0800 032 0202

Email: pals@nhct.nhs.uk

Post: FREEPOST PALS

South of Tyne

Tel: 0800 328 4397

Text: 07825 061 035

Email: pals@cntw.nhs.uk

Post: Patient Advice and Liaison Service, Garden Lodge,
Hopewood Park, Ryhope, Sunderland, SR2 0NB

9am – 4.30 pm, Monday to Friday

An answerphone is available at all times for you to leave a message. A member of the PALS team will aim to return your call as soon as possible.

Further information about the content, reference sources or production of this leaflet can be obtained from the Patient Information Centre. If you would like to tell us what you think about this leaflet please get in touch.

This information can be made available in a range of formats on request (eg Braille, audio, larger print, easy read, BSL or other languages). Please contact the Patient Information Centre
Tel: 0191 246 7288

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