



# Oxybutynin for menopausal symptoms

Menopause is a normal event, but some women have troublesome symptoms such as hot flushes and night sweats. Currently the most effective treatment is menopausal hormone therapy (MHT). Oxybutynin is a non-hormonal treatment that may be prescribed for women who need to or want to avoid MHT.

## Why have you been prescribed oxybutynin?

Oxybutynin is a medication used most often to relieve an overactive bladder. However, it has also been shown to relieve menopausal hot flushes and sweats in almost 40 percent of women. Oxybutynin may be used as a patch or tablet.

## Before you take oxybutynin

Before taking oxybutynin, tell your doctor if you have:

- ▶ Glaucoma
- ▶ Bladder outflow blockage or urinary retention
- ▶ Myasthenia gravis
- ▶ Stomach/intestinal problems

If you suffer with any of the following conditions please discuss with your doctor as you may be more likely to experience side effects;

- ▶ Heart disease, abnormal heart beat or high blood pressure
- ▶ Liver disease or kidney disease
- ▶ Thyroid disease
- ▶ Parkinson's disease
- ▶ Acid reflux disease, hiatus hernia
- ▶ Ulcerative colitis or bowel disease

## How to take oxybutynin

Regular use will give the most benefit from oxybutynin.

**Tablets:** Take by mouth with a full glass of water, with or without food.

The usual adult dose is one 5mg tablet 2 to 3 times per day, however it is often started with one tablet (5mg) each night and increased slowly.

*\*older patients may be asked to start with half of a tablet (2.5mg) daily and increase doses more slowly*

**Patch:** This is applied to the skin twice per week (every 3 to 4 days) and is equivalent to 10mg (2 tablets) daily.

Apply to clean, dry, unbroken skin on your abdomen, hip or buttock.

Do not expose the patch to sunlight. Therefore, wear it under clothing. Remove and safely dispose of patch after 3–4 days and put a new patch on a different area (do not apply to the same place within 7 days). Try to change the patch on the same two days each week. Your box of patches contains information and a calendar checklist printed inside to help you remember your schedule.

## What are the side effects

Common side effects may include:

- ▶ Dry mouth
- ▶ Dry eyes, blurred vision
- ▶ Mild constipation
- ▶ Dizziness, drowsiness
- ▶ A rash where the patch was applied

## Stop using oxybutynin

and call your doctor if you are:

- ▶ Feeling very thirsty or hot
- ▶ Unable to urinate, heavy sweating, or hot and dry skin
- ▶ Blurred vision, tunnel vision, eye pain, or seeing halos around lights

Be cautious in the first 24 hours of taking this medication when doing any activity that requires alertness or clear vision until you are sure you can perform such activities safely.

Oxybutynin can decrease sweating and you may overheat if you are in warm or hot temperatures. Avoid becoming overheated in hot weather and during exercise or other strenuous activity.

Alcohol and other sedatives may increase the drowsiness that may be caused by oxybutynin.

## When will you see an improvement in symptoms?

A trial of 4 to 6 weeks is needed to assess if oxybutynin is effective, but further improvement can be seen after 12 weeks. Many patients notice some improvement by 2 weeks.

## How to stop taking oxybutynin?

Oxybutynin can be stopped abruptly. There is no need for gradual withdrawal.

## When should you see your doctor?

If this information does not answer your questions or you experience adverse effects from the treatment, please see your GP or contact the Menopause Clinic Nurse on (08) 6458 2222 pager 3358 (Monday – Wednesday).



This document can be made available in alternative formats on request.

© North Metropolitan Health Service - Nov 2019

**Women and Newborn Health Service**  
King Edward Memorial Hospital  
374 Bagot Road, Subiaco WA 6008  
Telephone: (08) 6458 2222  
[www.kemh.health.wa.gov.au](http://www.kemh.health.wa.gov.au)

**Disclaimer:** The advice and information contained herein is provided in good faith as a public service. However the accuracy of any statements made is not guaranteed and it is the responsibility of readers to make their own enquiries as to the accuracy, currency and appropriateness of any information or advice provided. Liability for any act or omission occurring in reliance on this document or for any loss, damage or injury occurring as a consequence of such act or omission is expressly disclaimed.