

# Discharge Instructions: Taking Long-Acting Nitroglycerin



Your healthcare provider prescribed a nitroglycerin for you. Nitroglycerin relieves chest pain caused by a lack of blood to the heart (angina) by getting more oxygen-rich blood to your heart. Long-acting nitroglycerin helps prevent angina. Follow the steps below for taking long-acting nitroglycerin.

The name of my long-acting nitroglycerin medicine is \_\_\_\_\_.

## Guidelines for use

- Follow the fact sheet that came with your medicine. It tells you when and how to take your medicine. Ask for a sheet if you didn't get one.
- Don't suddenly stop using nitroglycerin. This could cause an angina attack. If you wish to stop taking your medicine, talk with your provider first.
- Limit how much alcohol you drink. Too much alcohol can cause dizziness or fainting.
- Don't take certain medicines used to treat erectile dysfunction, such as sildenafil or tadalafil if you use long-acting nitroglycerin. The combination of nitroglycerin with these medicines can cause a severe drop in blood pressure. This can lead to dizziness or fainting. It can raise the risk for heart attack and stroke.
- **To use a nitroglycerin patch:**
  - Remove the old patch.
  - Apply a new patch to a clean, dry place on your chest or upper arm.
  - Pick a new place each time you put on a new patch.
  - Don't apply a patch where your skin is hairy, cut, irritated, scarred, or tattooed.
- **To use a nitroglycerin tablet or capsule:**
  - Take the tablet or capsule 60 minutes before or 2 hours after eating.
  - Swallow the pill with a glass of water.
  - Don't break, chew, or crush the tablet or capsule.
- **To use a nitroglycerin ointment:**
  - Measure the prescribed amount of ointment onto the paper that comes with it.
  - Tape the paper in place with skin tape for as long as instructed, then remove it.
  - Use a new spot each time you apply the ointment.

## Possible side effects

Tell your provider if you have any of these side effects. Never stop taking the medicine until your provider tells you to. Mild side effects include:

- More gas (flatulence) than normal

- Bloating
- Nausea
- Decreased appetite
- Weight loss
- Headache
- Dizziness
- Flushing (redness of the face, neck, or chest)

## Call 911

Call 911 if any of these occur:

- Chest pain that lasts for more than a few minutes
- Chest pain that occurs at rest
- Increased or unusual chest pain
- Severe headache
- Severe dizziness or fainting

## When to call your healthcare provider

Call your healthcare provider right away if any of the following occur:

- Nausea or vomiting
- Fast heartbeat (higher than 100 beats per minute)
- Swollen ankles
- Weakness

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