



What's my Drug?

Glyceryl trinitrate (GTN) spray is a common treatment for angina (chest pains on exertion, relieved by rest). Nitrates work by relaxing and opening up the coronary arteries. You can use nitrates to ease angina. They can also be used before exertion to prevent angina from starting.

How to use it: Before you use the spray read the instructions to make sure that you use it correctly but spray it under your tongue. Do not breathe it in. If your mouth is very dry the GTN might not work as well as it may not be absorbed properly. If an extra dose is needed leave 5 minutes between them, if this does not help to get rid of the chest pain or it is getting worse don't wait, call a doctor straight away.

Possible side effects include: Headache, flushing, or dizziness when standing up. Your pulse could become irregular. You could feel sick.

Rare but important side effects: Fainting, or feeling faint, can happen, as can skin rashes. You could notice a blue colour around your mouth (cyanosis). It can sometimes affect the circulation to the brain which could cause drowsiness and other symptoms.

Warnings and Cautions: If you need to use GTN frequently to relieve angina pain regularly let your doctor know. NB some sprays are aerosols. The spray from these is flammable, so keep it away from fires or naked flames. Other sprays are pump-sprays. If you have one of these check the instructions about how to use it effectively. Check the Product Information Leaflet for full details of all its other potential side effects. For men: you must not use medicines for erectile dysfunction if you have GTN tablets, e.g. sildenafil (Viagra). Check with your doctor if necessary.