

- If your symptoms are worse at night, try raising the head of the bed by 10 to 20 cm (4 to 8 inches) using blocks under the legs of the bed.
- Stop or reduce your alcohol consumption. Do not regularly drink more than 14 units per week. If you do drink as much as this, it is best to spread this evenly across 3 days or more. If you feel that you have a problem with alcohol, talk to a healthcare professional.
- Stop smoking. Discuss ways to quit smoking with a healthcare professional or call “Help Me Quit” free on 0800 085 2219.

Q *What should I do if I develop problems?*

A You should talk to a healthcare professional if:

- your symptoms do not get any better, or they get worse
- you experience vomiting, especially if this contains blood or material that looks like coffee grounds
- your bowel movements are dark and sticky
- swallowing is difficult or painful
- you have unexplained weight loss.

Seek urgent medical attention if you experience chest pain that gets worse with or after exercise, or pain that goes into your chin or left shoulder—as this type of pain may be a sign of a heart problem.

To be completed by healthcare professional:

Name of PPI stopped:	<input type="text"/>
Medicines given to control symptoms (if applicable):	<input type="text"/>
Name of healthcare professional:	<input type="text"/>
Contact number:	<input type="text"/>

PATIENT INFORMATION

STOPPING YOUR PPI

What is a PPI?

PPIs, or proton pump inhibitors, are a group of medicines that are used to reduce the amount of acid that your stomach makes. By lowering the acid level, they can help relieve symptoms and prevent harm.

You will have been given one of the following PPIs:

- esomeprazole
- lansoprazole
- omeprazole
- pantoprazole
- rabeprazole

Q *Why am I taking a PPI?*

A Your healthcare professional will talk with you about why a PPI might be helpful and how long you should take it for. This will depend on why you are taking it, because PPIs can be used for lots of different reasons.

Q *How long should I take my PPI for?*

A To start with, you may be given a PPI for 4 weeks. If your symptoms continue then you may be given another 4-week course.

Many people find that after 4 to 8 weeks of taking a PPI their symptoms are better. After this time you should stop taking the PPI.

Q *Why should I stop my PPI treatment?*

A Your healthcare professional has decided that you no longer need to take a PPI. This will help prevent any side effects that can be caused by long-term PPI treatment. Unwanted side effects of long-term PPI treatment include increased risk of fractures, infections, and low magnesium.

If you are unsure why your PPI is being stopped, or you would like to discuss this further, then ask a healthcare professional. You should only be taking PPIs long-term if there is a definite need, which your healthcare professional has discussed with you.

Q *How will I stop my PPI?*

A Your healthcare professional will usually recommend one of three options for stopping your PPI. These are:

1. Stop taking the PPI

You may be advised to stop taking your PPI, either straightaway or when your current supply is finished, and take an antacid and/or alginate if you still have symptoms. An antacid neutralises the acid in your stomach, and an alginate prevents acid flowing into your oesophagus (food pipe).

2. Take PPI only when needed

You may be advised to take your PPI only when you have symptoms. When the symptoms are relieved (often after a few days) you would then stop taking the PPI.

3. Reduce PPI dose

If you have taken your PPI for several months, and particularly if you have been taking a high dose, your healthcare professional may reduce your PPI dose for a few weeks before stopping it.

Q *What if my symptoms come back?*

A Some people find that when they stop taking their PPI, their symptoms return and may even seem worse than before they started treatment. This is because if you take a PPI for more than a few weeks, your stomach will try to increase its ability to make acid. This means that for a while after you stop taking your PPI, the acid levels in your stomach may be higher than before you started treatment.

Your healthcare professional may give you an antacid and/or alginate. If needed, these can help to control your symptoms until your acid levels return to normal. Alternatively, you may be given a medicine known as an H₂-receptor antagonist, such as ranitidine, which works in a similar way to a PPI but has fewer long-term side effects.

If you have symptoms when you stop taking your PPI and you have not been offered any other medicine, or if you think the medicine you've been given is not working, you should talk to a healthcare professional.

Symptoms can sometimes come back again, possibly after several months. If this happens, you should talk to a healthcare professional.

Q *What can I do to help?*

A Lifestyle advice for helping with symptoms:

- Keep to a healthy weight.
- Avoid food and drink that make your symptoms worse, such as spicy or fatty foods, chocolate, coffee, cola drinks, orange juice.
- Eat meals at regular times.
- Avoid large or late meals and avoid bending over or lying down immediately after eating.
- Avoid medicines that can make symptoms worse, for example, some painkillers. Ask a healthcare professional which medicines are best for you to take.