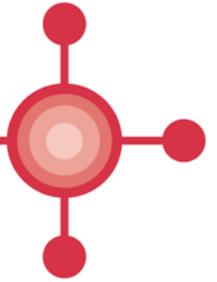


All Wales Medicines Strategy Group

Grŵp Strategaeth Meddyginiaethau Cymru Gyfan



# **Tramadol Educational Resource Materials**

## **Patient Information Leaflet**

November 2013

These educational resource materials have been prepared by a multiprofessional collaborative group, with support from the All Wales Prescribing Advisory Group (AWPAG) and the All Wales Therapeutics and Toxicology Centre (AWTTC), and has subsequently been endorsed by the All Wales Medicines Strategy Group (AWMSG).

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# Tramadol

## Information for patients

### Tramadol is a painkiller prescribed by your doctor for moderate to severe pain relief

If taken according to the doctor's instructions, and by the intended person, there is little risk of experiencing any harmful effects.

**You must NOT take more than the dose the doctor has prescribed.**

**DO NOT 'lend' or 'share' prescription-only medicines with anyone else.**

### What is tramadol and what is it used for?

Tramadol is a strong painkiller. It belongs to the class of opioids that act on the central nervous system. It is used to treat moderate to severe pain when other painkillers are not effective.

### What are the side effects of tramadol?

Amongst other side effects, tramadol may cause **drowsiness**. Make sure your reactions are normal before driving, operating machinery or doing any other jobs that could be dangerous if you were not fully alert.

#### Common

Dizziness  
Constipation

#### Less common

Hallucinations  
Confusion  
Convulsions

#### Rare

Addiction  
Withdrawal effects (e.g. anxiety, sweating and stomach pains) when stopping the medicine

### Can I overdose on tramadol?

You should never take more tramadol than your doctor has told you to. Overdose of tramadol can result in breathing difficulties, fits, sickness, unconsciousness and death. The usual **maximum** dose for tramadol is **400 mg in 24 hours**, e.g. two 50 mg capsules up to four times a day. If you are taking a longer-lasting tablet, you should not take this more than twice daily.

### Can I become addicted to tramadol?

There is a risk that you may become addicted to or dependent on this medication (a need to keep taking the medicine). If you take tramadol for a long time, you can become used to the effects and you may need to take higher doses to control your pain.

**You should not suddenly stop taking these tablets unless your doctor tells you to. If you want to stop taking your tablets, discuss this with your doctor first.**

They will tell you how to do this, usually by reducing the dose gradually, so you do not experience unpleasant effects. If you suddenly stop taking these tablets, you may get withdrawal symptoms such as agitation, anxiety, palpitations, shaking and sweating.

## What do I do if I take more tramadol than I should, or if someone else takes my medicine?

If you are worried and need advice, contact the pharmacy that dispensed the medicine, or call: **NHS DIRECT 0845 4647**

In an emergency, phone for an ambulance: **Dial 999**

Please remember to keep any medicines they have taken, as well as the container, to show the doctor, nurse or paramedic.

## Taking tramadol with other medicines

Tramadol can interact with other medicines. This means it can affect the way other medicines work, or other medicines can affect the way it works. This can increase the risk of side effects.

### Do not drink alcohol whilst taking tramadol

Take special care and speak to your doctor or pharmacist if:

- You are taking medicine for depression
- You are on medication for epilepsy
- You take warfarin
- You have any kidney problems
- You are addicted to other painkillers or medicines
- You have any alcohol dependency issues

## If in doubt, speak to your pharmacist or doctor.

**Always read the label and the leaflet inside the box. Make sure you know exactly what the medicine is and what it is for. Tramadol may not be suitable for children, pregnant or breastfeeding women, or the elderly. Tramadol might not be suitable for people with certain other medical conditions or people taking other medicines.**

**Tramadol is a prescription-only medication. This means that you should only take this medication if it has been prescribed to you by your doctor. You should not take any prescription-only medicines that belong to family or friends.**

## Useful contacts

### Action on Pain

Support for people affected by chronic pain.

Helpline: 0845 603 1593 (weekdays 10am–4pm)

Website: [www.action-on-pain.co.uk/](http://www.action-on-pain.co.uk/)

### The British Pain Society

General information about pain.

Website: [www.britishpainsociety.org](http://www.britishpainsociety.org)

### The Patients Association

Giving patients the opportunity to raise concerns and share experiences of healthcare.

Phone: 0845 6084455

Website: [www.patients-association.org.uk/](http://www.patients-association.org.uk/)

### Wales Drug and Alcohol Helpline

A single point of contact for anyone in Wales wanting information or help relating to drugs or alcohol.

Helpline: 0808 808 2234 (24hrs 7 days a week)

Website: [www.dan247.org.uk/](http://www.dan247.org.uk/)