

People often think of things to ask  
but forget them when they come  
to clinic.

Questions to ask next time:

### Useful contacts

South Devon Healthcare  
NHS Foundation Trust  
Torbay Hospital  
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TQ2 7AA

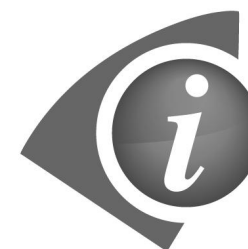
☎ Tel. (01803) 614567

Parkinson's Disease nurse  
specialist

Consultant's Secretary

South Devon Healthcare **NHS**  
NHS Foundation Trust

### ***PATIENT INFORMATION***



## Drug Treatment in Parkinson's Disease

### Amantidine

**Amantidine** -was originally developed as a preventative treatment for flu but was noted to help people with Parkinson's disease.

The way it works in Parkinson's disease is not fully understood but it seems to increase release of dopamine from the nerve cells and reduces its reuptake. Thus increasing the amount available to act in the brain. It has some Anticholinergic activity and it also blocks MNDA receptors (another brain chemical).

It can be used in Parkinson's disease by its self or in conjunction with other drugs. It can sometimes reduce severe involuntary movement in advanced disease.

It can also help in some cases of Parkinsonism when patients have not responded to other drugs. However there is a tendency for patients to become tolerant to the drugs.

## Preparations

### Amantidine (Symmetrel)

- ❖ **Red brown capsules** 100 mgs
- ❖ **Liquid** 50mgs per 5ml

## Dosage

Starts at 100mgs in the morning increasing to 100mgs morning and early afternoon after 1-4 weeks (depending on response). It can be increased to 200 mgs twice a day.

Studies have also looked at Amantidine in the treatment of dyskinesias. Doses up to 200 mgs three times a day have been used but this is above the licensed dose.

For patients with involuntary movement, doses as high as 200 mgs three times a day have been used but these are above the licensed dose.

## Side effects

Anorexia, weight loss, nausea, abdominal disturbance, insomnia, dizziness, fits, confusion, hallucinations, skin rash and leg swelling.

## Special precautions

**Avoid if you have epilepsy or previous gastric ulcers.**

It can worsen heart failure.

If side effects occur you should consult your doctor or Parkinson's Nurse Specialist.

**Do not suddenly stop the medication as this can cause serious problems.** It needs to be withdrawn gradually.