

What is Loperamide?

Loperamide is a drug designed to reduce diarrhoea.

How does it work?

Loperamide works by slowing down the passage of food through the gut.

The longer food takes to pass through the gut, the more time there is for water to be absorbed from it through the gut wall.

The stools that are then produced are thicker and firmer and so you will need fewer trips to the toilet.

What dose do I take?

A suggested starting dose of Loperamide will have been discussed with you. People vary a lot in their response to Loperamide.

It sometimes needs some experimentation to find the dose that will control your bowels without causing constipation. The more you take the firmer your stools should become. If you take more than you need, you may feel constipated. If you do not take enough, your stools will remain loose or soft. It is usual to start on a low dose and build it up slowly over a few days so you can judge how your body is responding.

Amount you can take	Actual dose of Loperamide
1 Capsule / tablet	2 milligrams
1 Teaspoon (5ml)	1 Milligram
1 Half teaspoon (2.5ml)	Half a milligram

It is best to take Loperamide half an hour before a meal. This will help to slow down the usual gut activity that is stimulated by eating.

Most people find that the bowel is most active in the morning and so Loperamide will help most if taken before breakfast. The medicine starts to work within half an hour of taking it, and is effective for 8-12 hours. This means that doses taken after lunch time are NOT likely to help much if all your problems are in the morning. HOWEVER, a dose last thing at night may help with early morning frequency.

Loperamide is a very safe drug which is not addictive. It can be taken in doses of up to 8 capsules per day (16 milligrams) per day over long periods of time. Do not take more than 16 milligrams per day without medical advice

St Mark's electrolyte solution:
Basic Formula

Glucose Powder	6 Teaspoons (20g)
Table Salt (Sodium Chloride)	1 Level 5ml teaspoon (3.5g)
Sodium Bicarbonate powder	1 Heaped 2.5ml teaspoon (2.5g)
Drinking Water	1 Litre

Formula with Sugar-Free Squash

Glucose Powder	6 Teaspoons (20g)
Table Salt (Sodium Chloride)	1 Level 5ml teaspoon (3.5g)
Sodium Bicarbonate Powder	1 heaped 2.5ml teaspoon (2.5g)
Drinking Water	800ml
Sugar-free squash e.g. Robinsons R	200ml

St Marks solution is more palatable when cold.

St Marks solution can be kept for up to 24hrs if kept at fridge temperature. It may be worth investing in suitable vacuum flasks.

Normal, tap water ice cubes should not be added to St Marks solution as they will dilute it. However, St Marks solution will freeze in a domestic freezer and can be made into ice cubes.



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For further assistance or to receive this information in a different format, please contact the department which created this leaflet.

PATIENT INFORMATION

Explaining how to take Loperamide (Imodium)

