

## PATIENT INFORMATION

## Candesartan for Migraine

**What is candesartan?**

Candesartan is a tablet that is often used to lower blood pressure. However, if you are prescribed this medicine, it does not mean that your doctor is treating your blood pressure. This medicine can also be used to treat other conditions including **migraine**. They do not work as painkillers during an attack, but if taken regularly, can reduce the number of migraine attacks.

Trials have shown it to be effective in reducing the number of migraine attacks and, although Candesartan is not licenced in the UK for migraine, it is widely used in Headache Clinics and by GPs for migraine treatment.

**What is the dose of candesartan?**

The starting dose for the prevention of migraine is 2 mg in the morning. If you have no side effects after the first two weeks, the dose can be increased by 2 mg. This can be further increased every two weeks until you reach a maximum of 8 mg twice a day. **If your headaches resolve at a lower dose continue at that dose;** otherwise continue on the higher dose for three months unless you develop side effects.

	Morning	Evening
Take for 14 days	2mg	
If no improvement take for further 14 days	2mg	2mg
If no improvement take for further 14 days	4mg	2mg
If no improvement take for further 14 days	4mg	4mg
If no improvement take for further 14 days	6mg	4mg
If no improvement take for further 14 days	6mg	6mg
If no improvement take for further 14 days	8mg	6mg
If no improvement take thereafter	8mg	8mg

## How long should I take candesartan?

Preventative medications must be titrated slowly to an effective or maximum tolerable dose and continued for at least 6-8 weeks to adequately assess effect. If you develop side effects (see below) you will either need to stop this or reduce back down to a lower level.

Consider gradual withdrawal after 6-12 months if you have improved.

You will need to have a **blood test** to check your kidney function 2 weeks after any increase in candesartan. It would also be recommended that you have blood pressure checks at the same time.

## Who cannot take candesartan?

You must not take candesartan if:

- You are pregnant or planning a pregnancy or breast feeding
- You are sensitive to any of the ingredients in the product
- You have significant kidney condition (your doctor will consider this)
- You have liver disease or gallbladder disease
- A narrowing of your heart valves
- You have a history of idiopathic or hereditary angioedema

## Does candesartan have any side effects?

Like many medicines, candesartan may cause side effects in some patients, particularly when you first start taking it.

The most common side effects include:

- Low blood pressure, dizziness, and light-headedness
- Impairment of kidney function (very rarely kidney failure)- *this will be seen on the blood tests taken after starting and after each dose increase*
- Respiratory infection
- Changes in blood tests (especially increased potassium)
- Cough
- *Candesartan may cause a reduction in number of white blood cells. Your resistance to infection may be decreased and you may notice tiredness, an infection, or a fever. If this happens contact your doctor*

This data should be read in conjunction with the patient information leaflet that can be found inside all boxes of medication. The use of any medicine is based on considerations of how benefits outweigh potential side effects.

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