

# Exelon<sup>®</sup> Patch

Rivastigmine

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## Consumer Medicine Information

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### What is in this leaflet

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This leaflet answers some common questions about Exelon Patch.

It does not contain all the available information. It does not take the place of talking to your doctor or pharmacist.

The information in this leaflet was last updated on the date listed on the final page. More recent information on the medicine may be available.

**You should ensure that you speak to your pharmacist or doctor to obtain the most up-to-date information on the medicine. You can also download the most up-to-date leaflet from [www.medsafe.govt.nz](http://www.medsafe.govt.nz).**

Those updates may contain important information about the medicine and its use of which you should be aware.

All medicines have risks and benefits. Your doctor has weighed the risks of you using it against the benefits they expect it will have for you.

**If you have any concerns about using this medicine, ask your doctor or pharmacist.**

**Keep this leaflet with the medicine.** You may need to read it again.

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### What Exelon Patch is used for

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Exelon Patch contains rivastigmine as the active substance.

Rivastigmine belongs to a class of substances called cholinesterase inhibitors and is used to treat a condition called Alzheimer's disease.

Alzheimer's disease is a condition in which changes in the brain cause problems with memory, thinking and

behaviour. These problems gradually become worse with time.

In patients with Alzheimer's dementia, certain nerve cells die in the brain, resulting in low levels of the neurotransmitter: acetylcholine (a substance that allows nerve cells to communicate with each other).

Exelon Patch works by preventing the breakdown of acetylcholine. This chemical is needed to help keep the brain working properly.

Exelon Patch helps to reduce the symptoms of Alzheimer's disease and to slow down the mental decline that happens in people with this condition. It helps to improve the patient's ability to cope with everyday activities. It does not cure the condition.

**Ask your doctor if you have any questions about why this medicine has been prescribed for you.**

Your doctor may have prescribed it for another reason.

Exelon Patch is only available with a doctor's prescription. It is not addictive.

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### Before you use Exelon Patch

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#### *When you must not use it*

**Do not use Exelon Patch if you have had an allergic reaction to any of the following:**

- rivastigmine, the active ingredient in Exelon Patch
- any of the other ingredients of Exelon Patch listed at the end of this leaflet.
- other related "carbamate" medicines (if you are unsure

about these, ask your doctor or pharmacist)

Symptoms of an allergic reaction may include wheezing or difficulty breathing; swelling of the face, lips, tongue or other parts of the body; rash or hives on the skin.

**Do not apply Exelon Patch if you have had a skin reaction which has spread beyond the patch size, if there was a more intense local reaction (such as blisters, increasing skin inflammation, swelling) and if it did not improve within 48 hours after removal of the transdermal patch.**

**Do not use Exelon Patch after the expiry date printed on the pack.**

If you use it after the expiry date has passed, it may not work as well as it should.

**Do not use Exelon Patch if the packaging is torn or shows signs of tampering.**

In that case, return it to your pharmacist.

**Do not use Exelon Patch in children.**

It is not known how Exelon Patch will affect children.

**If you are not sure whether you should start using Exelon Patch, talk to your doctor or pharmacist.**

#### *Before you start to use it*

**Tell your doctor if you have any of the following conditions:**

- a problem with your heart including an irregular or slow heartbeat, QTc prolongation, a family history of QTc prolongation, torsade de pointes, or have low potassium or magnesium
- a history of stomach ulcer

- problems with your lungs such as asthma or obstructive pulmonary disease
- difficulty passing urine (water)
- seizures (fits or convulsions)
- problems with your kidneys or liver
- if you experience gastro-intestinal reactions such as nausea (feeling sick) and vomiting (being sick)
- if you have a low body weight (less than 50 kg).

If you have any of the above conditions your doctor may want to take special precautions while you are using Exelon Patch.

**Tell your doctor if you are pregnant or breast-feeding. Ask your doctor about the risks and benefits of using Exelon Patch in this case.**

It is not known whether using Exelon Patch during pregnancy may affect your baby. Breast-feeding is not recommended while you are using this medicine. It is not known whether the active ingredient in Exelon Patch passes into the breast milk and could affect your baby.

### ***Taking other medicines***

**Tell your doctor if you are taking any other medicines, including any that you buy without a prescription from a pharmacy, supermarket or health food shop.** Some medicines and Exelon Patch may interfere with each other.

These include:

- metoclopramide (a medicine used to alleviate or prevent nausea and vomiting)
- cholinergic medicines (e.g. bethanecol, medicines used during surgery)
- anticholinergic medicines (e.g. medicines for stomach cramps, medicines for travel sickness, many medicines used to treat mental illness)
- medicines called beta blockers, used to treat hypertension,

angina, and other heart conditions (e.g. atenolol)

**Use caution when Exelon is taken together with medicinal products known to prolong the heart's electrical system (QT interval) including drugs such as quinidine, amiodarone, pimozide, halofantrine, cisapride, citalopram, mizolastin, moxifloxacin or erythromycin. Your doctor may also monitor your clinical condition as needed.**

You may need to take different amounts of your medicines or to take different medicines while you are using Exelon Patch.

Your doctor and pharmacist have more information on medicines to be careful with or avoid while using Exelon Patch.

**If you have not told your doctor about any of these things, tell him/her before you start using this medicine.**

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## **How to use Exelon Patch**

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**Always apply this medicine exactly as your doctor or pharmacist has told you. Check with your doctor or pharmacist, or healthcare provider if you are not sure.**

**Do not exceed the recommended dose prescribed by your doctor.**

These instructions may differ from the information contained in this leaflet.

**If you do not understand the instructions on the label, ask your doctor or pharmacist for help.**

### ***How to apply Exelon Patch***

**Remove any existing Exelon patch before putting on a new one. See "How to remove Exelon Patch".**

Having multiple patches on your body could expose you to an

excessive amount of this medicine which could be potentially dangerous.

**Apply your new patch to a different area of skin for example on the right side of your body one day, then on the left side the next day).**

Consecutive patches can be applied to the same general anatomic area (e.g., if the first patch is applied on right upper arm, the next patch can be applied to left upper arm or to another spot on the right upper arm).

**Before you apply Exelon Patch, make sure that your skin is:**

- clean, dry and hairless
- free of any powder, oil, moisturiser, or lotion (that could keep the patch from sticking to your skin properly)
- free of cuts, rashes and/or irritations.

**Apply ONE patch only per day to ONLY ONE of the following locations on your body:**

- upper arm, left or right side, or
- chest, left or right side, or
- upper back, left or right side, or
- lower back, left or right side.

A leaflet in the carton contains diagrams showing these locations.

### ***How to remove Exelon Patch***

**Gently pull at one edge of the Exelon Patch to remove it completely from the skin.**

**If any adhesive residue is left on your skin, gently soak the area with warm water and mild soap, or use baby oil to remove it. Do not use alcohol or other dissolving liquids (nail polish remover or other solvents).**

**Wash your hands with soap and water after removing the patch.**

**In case of contact with eyes or if the eyes become red after handling the patch, rinse them immediately with plenty of water and seek medical advice if symptoms do not resolve.**

## **How much to use**

The usual starting dose is Exelon Patch 5 once a day. After a minimum of four weeks, if you don't have any problems with the medicine, the dose may be increased to Exelon Patch 10 once a day. If well tolerated, your doctor may increase the daily dose to Exelon Patch 15.

**Do not wear more than one Exelon Patch at a time.**

**If for any reason you stop using Exelon Patch for more than three days, tell your doctor before you start using Exelon Patch again.**

Your doctor will restart you using Exelon Patch 5 to help prevent side effects such as nausea and vomiting.

## **How to use it**

**A leaflet in the carton contains pictures and information on how to apply the patch properly.**

**Apply the Exelon patch at about the same time each day.**

Applying your patch at the same time each day will have the best effect. It will also help you remember when to apply the patch.

## **How long to use it**

**Apply a new patch every day.**

Exelon patch should be replaced with a new one after 24 hours.

**Apply the new patch at about the same time each day.**

**Change your patch at the same time each day to obtain the best effect from your medicine. It will also help you remember when to use it.**

**Continue using Exelon Patch for as long as your doctor tells you to.**

This medicine helps to slow the progression of Alzheimer's disease but does not cure it. Your treatment can be continued for as long as it benefits your condition. Your doctor can give you more information.

## **Switching from Exelon Capsules to Exelon Patch**

Your doctor will have advised you on switching from Exelon Capsules.

**NEVER take Exelon Capsules when using Exelon Patch.**

### ***If you forget to use it***

**If it is almost time for you to apply the next patch dose, skip the patch you missed and apply the next patch when you are meant to.**

**Otherwise, apply a new patch as soon as you remember and then go back to your usual schedule.**

**Do not apply two Exelon patches to make up for the one you missed.**

This may increase the chance of you getting an unwanted side effect.

**Tell your doctor if you have not applied your Exelon Patch for more than three days. Do not apply the next patch before you have talked to your doctor.**

Your doctor will restart you at the lowest dose to help prevent side effects such as nausea and vomiting.

**If you have trouble remembering when to use or replace your patches, ask your pharmacist for some hints.**

### ***If your Exelon Patch falls off***

**If your Exelon Patch falls off, apply a new patch for the rest of the day. Replace this patch the next day at the same time as usual.**

**Do not re-apply the used patch.**

Applying a new patch ensures that your body keeps getting the medicine it needs.

### ***If you use too much (overdose)***

**If you think that you or anyone else may have applied accidentally more than one Exelon Patch at a time or swallowed a patch, immediately telephone your doctor or the National Poisons**

**Information Centre, Dunedin (telephone number 0800 POISON or 0800 764 766), or go to the Accident and Emergency at your nearest hospital. Do this even if there are no signs of discomfort or poisoning.**

**Keep the telephone numbers for these places handy.**

Because of the way Exelon Patch is used, an intentional overdose is unlikely. Applying more than one patch or swallowing a patch may cause

- nausea (feeling sick)
- vomiting.
- diarrhoea
- high blood pressure
- hallucinations (hearing or seeing things that are not there)
- fainting
- unusually slow heart beat

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## **While you are using Exelon Patch**

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### ***Things you must do***

**Be sure to keep all of your doctor's appointments so your progress can be checked.**

You and your caregiver can help to produce the maximum benefit from your treatment by keeping in close contact with your doctor.

**Make sure you or your caregiver tell your doctor if you experience considerable nausea, vomiting and diarrhoea with loss of appetite and weight loss.**

You may become dehydrated (losing too much fluid) if vomiting or diarrhoea are prolonged.

**Talk to your doctor right away if you have skin inflammation, blisters or swelling of the skin that are increasing and spreading.**

**If you become pregnant while using Exelon Patch, tell your doctor.**

**If you are going to have surgery, tell your doctor and anaesthetist that you are using Exelon Patch.**

Exelon Patch may affect some medicines you receive during surgery.

**If you are about to be started on any new medicine, remind your doctor and pharmacist that you are using Exelon Patch.**

**Tell any other doctor, dentist or pharmacist who treats you that you are using Exelon Patch.**

### ***Things you must not do***

**Avoid placing the patch where it might be rubbed off by tight clothing.**

**Do not give this medicine to anyone else, even if their condition seems similar to yours.**

**Do not use Exelon Patch to treat any other complaints unless your doctor tells you to.**

**Your doctor will tell you whether your illness allows you to drive vehicles and use machines safely.**

Exelon may cause dizziness and somnolence, mainly at the start of treatment or when increasing the dose. Therefore, you should wait to know what effects the drug may cause before engaging in such activities. If you feel dizzy or drowsy, do not drive, use machines or perform any other tasks that require your attention.

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## **Side effects**

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**Tell your doctor or pharmacist as soon as possible if you do not feel well while you are using Exelon Patch, even if you do not think it is connected with the medicine.**

All medicines can have side effects. Sometimes they are serious, but most of the time they are not. You may

need medical treatment if you get some of the side effects.

**Do not be alarmed by this list of possible side effects. You may not experience any of them.**

**Ask your doctor or pharmacist to answer any questions you may have.**

**Tell your doctor if you notice any of the following and they worry you:**

- nausea or feeling sick
- vomiting
- passing frequent or watery bowel movements
- loss of appetite
- weight loss
- dizziness or spinning sensation
- headache
- difficulty in sleeping
- nightmares
- abdominal pain
- unusual weakness
- feeling restless or unusually active
- fatigue, tiredness
- skin redness, itching, irritation, swelling (application site reactions)
- skin inflammation with rash
- inability to retain urine adequately (loss of bladder control)
- infection involving the parts of the body producing urine (kidneys, bladder, or the tubes that connect the kidneys to the bladder or the bladder to the outside of the body)
- fall
- muscle stiffness

The above side effects usually happen at the start of treatment when the dose is being increased. They are not usually serious and may gradually disappear as your body gets used to the medicine.

Women are more likely than men to get some side effects (e.g. nausea, vomiting, loss of appetite, weight loss).

**Tell your doctor immediately or go to Accident and Emergency at your nearest hospital if you notice any of the following:**

- mood changes such as feeling anxious, nervous, agitated, very sad or aggressive
- unusual thinking, severe suspiciousness, or having fixed, irrational ideas not shared by others
- feeling, hearing or seeing things that are not there
- severe confusion
- unusual tiredness or weakness, sleepiness, feeling generally unwell
- increased sweating, losing too much fluid, dehydration
- signs of allergy such as rash or hives on the skin; swelling of the face, lips, tongue or other parts of the body; wheezing or difficulty breathing
- irregular, slow or fast heart beat (problems with heart rhythm)
- chest pain
- severe dizziness, fainting or fits (seizures)
- vomiting blood or material that looks like coffee grounds (gastrointestinal haemorrhage)
- blood in stools (bowel motions), bleeding from the back passage, black sticky stools or bloody diarrhoea
- stiff limbs, trembling hands, uncontrollable movements (extrapyramidal signs)
- loss of coordination, difficulty in speaking, or breathing, and signs of brain disorder (stroke)
- severe upper stomach pain, often with nausea and vomiting (inflammation of the pancreas)
- yellow skin, yellowing of the whites of eyes, abnormal darkening of the urine or unexplained nausea, vomiting, tiredness and loss of appetite (liver disorders)
- skin inflammation, blisters or swelling of the skin that are increasing and spreading.

The above side effects may be serious. You may need urgent medical attention or hospitalisation. These side effects are very rare.

Some side effects can only be found when your doctor does tests from time to time (e.g. changes in liver function, gastrointestinal ulcers, raised blood pressure).

**Tell your doctor if you notice anything else that is making you unwell.**

Other side effects not listed above may happen in some people.

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## After using Exelon Patch

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### Storage

- Keep your patches in the original container (sachet) until it is time to use them.
- Store the patches in a cool dry place where the temperature stays below 25°C.
- Do not store Exelon Patch or any other medicine in the bathroom or near a sink.
- Do not leave it in the car or on window sills.

Heat and dampness can destroy some medicines. Exelon Patch will keep well if it is cool and dry.

**Keep the medicine where children cannot reach it.**

A locked cupboard at least one-and-a-half metres above the ground is a good place to store medicines.

### Disposal

**After the patch has been removed, fold it in half with the adhesive sides on the inside and press them together. Return the used patch to its original sachet and discard safely out of the reach and sight of children.**

**If your doctor tells you to stop using Exelon Patch or the patches have passed their expiry date, ask**

**your pharmacist what to do with any medicine you have left over.**

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## Product description

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### What it looks like

Exelon Patch is available in two strengths, in packs of 30 patches.

- Exelon Patch 5, beige printed with “Exelon Patch 5” and “AMCX”.
- Exelon Patch 10, beige printed with “Exelon Patch 10” and “BHDI”

### Ingredients

Exelon Patch contains 9 or 18 mg of the active ingredient, rivastigmine.

They also contain:

- Vitamin E
- Poly butylmethacrylate
- Methylmethacrylate
- Acrylic copolymer
- Silicone oil

### Sponsor

Exelon Patch is supplied in New Zealand by:

NOVARTIS New Zealand Limited

PO Box 99102

Newmarket

Auckland 1149

Telephone 0800 354 335

® = Registered Trademark

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