

Loniten[®]

minoxidil

Consumer Medicine Information

What is in this leaflet

This leaflet answers some common questions about Loniten.

It does not contain all the available information.

It does not take the place of talking to your doctor or pharmacist.

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

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

Keep this leaflet with the medicine.

You may need to read it again.

What Loniten is used for

Loniten lowers high blood pressure. High blood pressure is also called hypertension.

Loniten works by relaxing the muscles of your blood vessels. This makes it easier for your blood to flow around your body and results in a decrease in your blood pressure.

Loniten is reserved for use in severe cases of high blood pressure where it is used in combination with other blood pressure lowering medicines.

Your doctor may have prescribed Loniten for another purpose. Ask your doctor if you have any questions about why Loniten has been prescribed for you.

This medicine is available only with a doctor's prescription.

Before you take Loniten

When you must not take it

Do not take Loniten if you have an allergy to:

- any medicine containing minoxidil
- any of the ingredients listed at the end of this leaflet.

Some of the symptoms of an allergic reaction may include:

- shortness of breath
- wheezing or difficulty breathing
- swelling of the face, lips, tongue or other parts of the body
- rash, itching or hives on the skin.

Do not take Loniten if you have or have had any of the following medical conditions:

- pheochromocytoma (a rare tumour of the adrenal gland, which sits near the kidney)
- pulmonary hypertension (high blood pressure in the vessels of the lung) due to a narrowing of the valve between the main blood vessels from the lung and the heart.

Do not take Loniten if you are pregnant.

You must not take Loniten if you are not using any form of contraception and could fall pregnant.

Do not take Loniten after the expiry date (EXP) printed on the pack.

If you take this medicine after the expiry date has passed, it may not work as well.

Do not take Loniten if the packaging is torn or shows signs of tampering.

If you are not sure whether you should start taking Loniten, talk to your doctor or pharmacist.

Before you start to take it

Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you:

1. have allergies to:

- any other medicines
- any other substances, such as foods, preservatives or dyes.

2. are pregnant or intend to become pregnant

Loniten is not recommended for use during pregnancy. If it is necessary for you to take Loniten, your doctor or pharmacist will discuss the risks and benefits of taking it during pregnancy.

3. are breast-feeding or plan to breast-feed

Loniten is not recommended while you are breast-feeding. Loniten passes into breast milk. It is not known whether this will have any effect on the baby. If there is a need to take Loniten while you are breast-feeding, your doctor will discuss with you the benefits and risks of taking it.

4. have or have had any other medical conditions, especially the following:

- unstable or mild hypertension
- symptoms of heart failure
- a heart attack
- fast heart rate
- chest pain
- renal failure
- regular dialysis
- liver disease.

If you have not told your doctor or pharmacist about any of the above, tell them before you start taking Loniten.

Taking other medicines

Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you are taking/using any other medicines, including any that you buy without a prescription from your pharmacy, supermarket or health food shop.

Some medicines may be affected by Loniten, or may affect how well it works. These include:

- guanethidine (a type of medicine used to treat high blood pressure).

Your doctor or pharmacist will be able to tell you what to do when taking Loniten with other medicines.

If you are not sure whether you are taking any of these medicines, check with your doctor or pharmacist.

Your doctor and pharmacist have more information on medicines to be careful with or avoid while taking Loniten.

How to take Loniten

How much to take

The usual adult dosage range of Loniten is between 5 mg and 40 mg per day. The maximum recommended dosage is 100 mg per day.

Your doctor will adjust the dose to suit your individual needs. Dosage

adjustments are usually made at intervals of 3 days or longer.

Your doctor or pharmacist will tell you how many tablets you will need to take each day. This depends on your condition and whether or not you are taking any other medicines.

Follow all directions given to you by your doctor or pharmacist carefully.

They may differ from the information contained in this leaflet.

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

How to take it

Swallow Loniten tablets with a glass of water.

How long to take it

Loniten helps control your high blood pressure, but does not cure it. Therefore, you must take Loniten every day.

Continue taking the tablets for as long as your doctor or pharmacist tells you.

Do not stop taking it unless your doctor or pharmacist tells you to.

If you forget to take it

If it is almost time for your next dose, skip the dose you missed and take your next dose when you are meant to.

Otherwise, take it as soon as you remember, and then go back to taking your medicine as you would normally.

Do not take a double dose to make up for the dose that you missed.

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

If you are not sure what to do, ask your doctor or pharmacist.

If you have trouble remembering to take your medicine, ask your pharmacist for some hints.

If you take too much (overdose)

Immediately telephone your doctor or pharmacist or the Poisons Information Centre (0800 POISON or 0800 764 766) for advice, or go to Accident and Emergency at your nearest hospital, if you think that you or anyone else may have taken too much Loniten. Do this even if there are no signs of discomfort or poisoning.

You may need urgent medical attention.

While you are taking Loniten

Things you must do

Tell any other doctors, dentists, and pharmacists who are treating you that you are taking Loniten.

If you are about to be started on any new medicine, tell your doctor, dentist or pharmacist that you are taking Loniten.

If you plan to have surgery that needs a general anaesthetic, tell your doctor or dentist that you are taking Loniten.

If you become pregnant while taking Loniten, tell your doctor.

Things you must not do

Do not give Loniten to anyone else, even if they have the same condition as you.

Do not take Loniten to treat any other complaints unless your doctor or pharmacist tells you to.

Do not stop taking Loniten, or lower the dosage, without checking with your doctor or pharmacist.

Things to be careful of

Be careful driving or operating machinery until you know how Loniten affects you.

As with some other blood pressure lowering medicines, Loniten may cause dizziness or light-headedness in some people. Make sure you know how you react to Loniten before you drive a car, operate machinery, or do anything else that could be dangerous if you are dizzy or light-headed.

While you are taking Loniten your doctor may recommend that you reduce the amount of salt in your diet.

If you feel that you are gaining weight due to the retention of water, tell your doctor. Your doctor may need to adjust the medicines you are taking.

Side effects

Tell your doctor or pharmacist as soon as possible if you do not feel well while you are taking Loniten.

Loniten helps most people with high blood pressure, but it may have unwanted side effects in a few people. All medicines can have side effects. Sometimes they are serious, most of the time they are not. You may need medical treatment if you get some of the side effects. Medicines can affect people in different ways.

It can be difficult to tell whether side effects are the result of taking Loniten, effects of your condition or side effects of other medicines you may be taking. For this reason it is important to tell your doctor of any change in your condition.

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

Tell your doctor if...

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

- unusual growth, thickening and darkening of fine body hair. This is usually first noticed on or around your face about 3 to 6

weeks after you start to take Loniten. This effect may slow after long-term use and will be reversed approximately 1 to 3 months after stopping Loniten therapy.

- changes in hair colour.

The above list includes the more common side effects of your medicine.

Tell your doctor as soon as possible if...

Tell your doctor as soon as possible if you notice any of the following:

- puffiness or swelling of your face, eyes, ankles, hands or feet
- weight gain
- increase in heart rate
- dizziness or light headedness (particularly when standing up from a sitting position)
- tiredness
- muscle aches
- constipation, diarrhoea, nausea or vomiting
- stomach pain or signs of indigestion
- rash
- breast tenderness
- frequent infections such as fever, severe chills, sore throat or mouth ulcers as a result of a decrease in white blood cell levels
- bleeding or bruising more easily.

The above list includes serious side effects that may require medical attention.

Go to hospital if...

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

- onset or worsening of angina (chest pain, or a feeling of tightness or pressure in the chest)
- pain behind the breast bone, sometimes spreading to the neck

and shoulders and sometimes accompanied by fever

- shortness of breath
- difficulty breathing
- peeling skin or skin redness
- severe blisters and bleeding in lips, mouth, nose and genitals.

You may need urgent medical attention.

Other side effects not listed above may occur in some patients. Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you notice anything that is making you feel unwell.

Do not be alarmed by this list of possible side effects.

You may not experience any of them.

Tell your doctor if you notice anything else that is making you feel unwell, even if it is not on this list.

After taking Loniten

Storage

Keep your tablets in a cool dry place where the temperature stays below 25 °C.

Do not store Loniten or any other medicine in the bathroom or near a sink.

Do not leave it in the car on hot days or on window sills.

Heat and dampness can destroy some medicines.

Keep your Loniten tablets where children cannot reach them.

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

Disposal

If your doctor or pharmacist tells you to stop taking Loniten or the tablets have passed their expiry date, ask your pharmacist what to do with any that are left over.

Product description

What it looks like

Loniten tablets are white in colour and have a circular, half oval shape.

One side of the tablet is scored and marked with U and 137; the other side is marked with the number 10.

Ingredients

Each tablet of Loniten contains 10 mg of the active ingredient minoxidil.

The tablets also contain:

- microcrystalline cellulose
- colloidal anhydrous silica
- lactose
- maize starch
- magnesium stearate.

Supplier

Pfizer New Zealand Limited

PO Box 3998

Auckland, New Zealand

Toll Free number: 0800 736 636

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