# CHLORPROMAZINE (tablet)

*klor-pro-ma-zeen*

## What does it do?

*Chlorpromazine* is used to treat some mental health problems such as schizophrenia. It is also used for hiccups, nausea and vomiting, and sometimes other conditions.

## Before you start

- Tell your doctor if you have heart, liver, bowel, bladder or prostate problems.
- Tell your doctor if you have diabetes, Parkinson's disease, angle-closure glaucoma, have ever had a seizure, blood clot, stroke or 'mini-stroke', or if you have experienced strange body movements with another medicine.
- Tell your doctor if you are pregnant, planning to become pregnant, or breastfeeding.
- Your doctor may do a heart test (ECG) before you start and while you are taking *chlorpromazine*.

## How should you take it?

Take *chlorpromazine* as directed with a glass of water. Do not break or crush the tablets.

## What if you forget a dose?

Take the missed dose as soon as possible. If it is close to the time for your next dose, skip the missed dose and carry on as normal. Do not take two doses at the same time.

## Can you take other medicines?

Some medicines available without a prescription may react with *chlorpromazine* including:

- some antihistamines or anti-nausea medicines such as promethazine (e.g. Phenergan®), hyoscine (e.g. Scopoderm®), meclozine (e.g. Sea-legs®)
- antacids (e.g. Mylanta®) - do not take these within two hours of taking *chlorpromazine*.

Tell your pharmacist or doctor about all medicines or treatments that you may be taking, including vitamins, herbal products (e.g. St John's wort, valerian) or recreational drugs (e.g. cannabis).

## What side effects might you notice?

| Side Effects | Recommended action |
|---|---|
| Fever, stiffness, sweating, confusion<br>Feeling restless, strange or uncontrolled movements, tremor<br>Fast or irregular heartbeat, fainting<br>Symptoms of a blood clot including: sudden shortness of breath, swelling or pain in one leg<br>Seizures<br>Symptoms of liver problems including: yellow skin or eyes, itching, dark urine, pale bowel motions, abdominal pain<br>Prolonged erection (longer than four hours) | Tell your doctor immediately |
| Dry mouth, blurred vision, constipation or trouble peeing (anticholinergic effects)<br>Drowsiness, dizziness<br>Weight gain<br>Stomach upset<br>Changes in periods<br>Sore or enlarged breasts, breastmilk production<br>Less interest in sex, impotence<br>Change in skin colour (blue, grey) | Tell your doctor if troublesome |

If you notice any other effects, discuss them with your doctor or pharmacist.

## Other information:

- *Chlorpromazine* can impair your ability to do tasks such as driving or using machines. Alcohol makes this worse. Discuss your risk with your health professional. (search NZTA - Are you safe to drive?)
- Protect yourself from too much sunlight while being treated with *chlorpromazine*. Always cover up and apply a thick layer of broad spectrum sunscreen (at least SPF 30) when outside. Do not use sunbeds.
- Smoking can change the effect of *chlorpromazine*. Tell your doctor if you give up, cut down or start smoking.
- *Chlorpromazine* reduces your body's ability to maintain a normal temperature. Be careful of becoming too cold or too hot. When exercising, drink plenty of water.
- You have an increased risk of getting diabetes while taking *chlorpromazine*. Discuss with your doctor.
- Do not stop taking *chlorpromazine* without talking to your doctor first.