# PETHIDINE

*peth-ih-deen*

## What does it do?

*Pethidine* is used to relieve strong pain.

## Before you start

- Tell your doctor if you have bowel or kidney problems, sleep apnoea, if you have ever had a seizure, or have had a recent head injury.
- Tell your doctor if you are pregnant, planning to become pregnant, or breastfeeding.

## How should you take it?

Take *pethidine* as directed with a glass of water. You can take it with or without food.

## What if you forget a dose?

If *pethidine* is taken regularly and it is nearly time for your next dose, skip the missed dose and take your next dose at the usual time. Otherwise, take the missed dose as soon as you remember. Do not take two doses at the same time.

## Can you take other medicines?

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

- sedating antihistamines (e.g. Phenergan®)
- cough suppressants (e.g. Duro-Tuss®, Benadryl Dry Forte®)
- some migraine medicines, such as sumatriptan (e.g. Sumagran Active®)

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) or recreational drugs.

## What side effects might you notice?

| Side Effects | Recommended action |
|---|---|
| Slow or shallow breathing, hard to wake up<br>Seizures | Tell your doctor immediately |
| Confusion, mood changes<br>Seeing, hearing or feeling things that aren't really there | Tell your doctor |
| Constipation | Take your prescribed laxatives. Tell your doctor |
| Drowsiness, dizziness<br>Nausea, vomiting, dry mouth or throat<br>Itching, flushing, sweating<br>Strange or uncontrolled movements | Tell your doctor if troublesome |

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

## Other information:

- If *pethidine* is not relieving your pain contact your health professional – your dose may need changing.
- *Pethidine* 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?)
- *Pethidine* may be addictive with long-term use.