New Zealand Formulary
PATIENT INFORMATION

# GALANTAMINE

*ga-lan-tah-meen*

## What does it do?

*Galantamine* is used to treat symptoms of Alzheimer's disease and dementia, such as confusion or memory loss.

## Before you start

- Tell your doctor if you have heart or bladder problems, or if you have ever had a stomach ulcer.
- 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 *galantamine*.

## How should you take it?

Take *galantamine* regularly with a glass of water. You can take it with or without food. Swallow whole – do not crush or chew.

## What if you forget a dose?

If 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 *galantamine* including:

- some antihistamines or anti-nausea medicines such as promethazine, chlorphenamine, hyoscine patches, or meclozine. These can also be in medicines for allergies and colds.

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 |
|---|---|
| Coughing or vomiting of blood, vomit that looks like coffee grounds, red or black bowel motions<br>Symptoms of a slow or irregular heartbeat including: feeling your heart skips a beat, dizziness or fainting | Tell your doctor immediately |
| Nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea, indigestion, loss of appetite, weight loss<br>Dizziness, tremor<br>Low mood | Tell your doctor if troublesome |

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

## Other information:

- *Galantamine* 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?)