Memory Assessment Service
Brighton & Hove

NHS

Information for people taking Rivastigmine transdermal patches (say: river-stig-mean)

What are rivastigmine patches used for?

- Rivastigmine (also called Exelon®) is mainly used to help treat the symptoms of Alzheimer's Disease (dementia) and also to help dementia in Parkinson's Disease
- It is known as an acetylcholinesterase inhibitor
- The patches release rivastigmine onto the skin where the body absorbs it so you don't need to take a capsule every day
- You also get less side effects because the amount in your body is very steady, and less stomach side effects as the rivastigmine doesn't go anywhere near the stomach.
- It is also made as capsules and a liquid.

What is the usual dose of the patches?

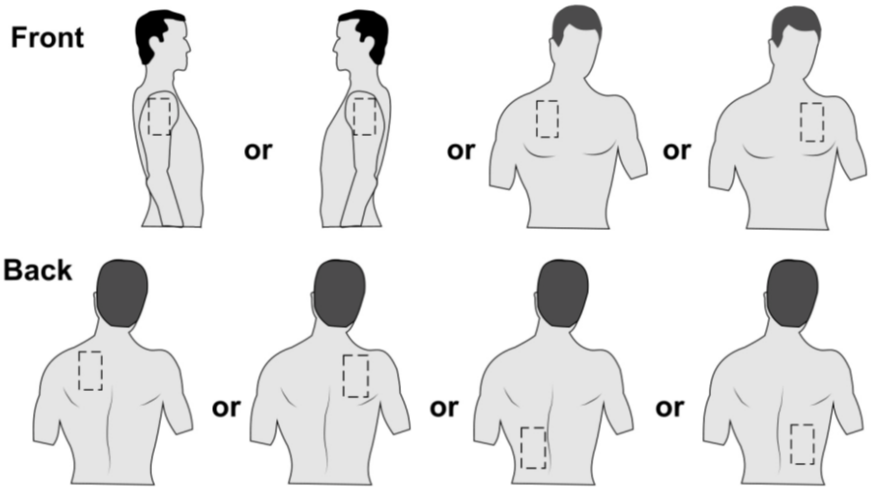
- The dose normally starts at 4.6mg patch daily, going up to a 9.5mg patch each day after a week or so.
- The top dose is 13.3mg a day
- Apply each patch at the same time every day.

Where should I apply the rivastigmine patch?

One patch should be applied each day to the:

- left upper arm **or** right upper arm
- left upper chest **or** right upper chest **(but avoid the breast area)**
- left upper back **or** right upper back
- left lower back **or** right lower back

Do not apply a new patch to exactly the same place again for at least 14 days



If you follow these instructions carefully, it will reduce the chances of getting a skin rash:

1. Make sure the skin area is clean dry, not hairy, with no rash, cuts, or any powder, creams, ointments or moisturisers. Otherwise the patch won't stay stuck on.
2. Take the old one off. Pull gently on one side of the patch and remove the whole patch.
3. Fold it in half so the sticky side sticks to itself and put it in the bin.
4. Get the new one out by using scissors to cut along the dotted line on the packet
5. Peel off one of the liners from the sticky side
6. Stick that to the skin, and then pull off the other liner
7. Now press the patch down firmly, especially round the edges.
8. Try to do this at the same time every day

nclude:
; used to treat fast heart rate and high blood pressure)

es?

o take action on. You must also see the maker's Patient Information Leaflet for no side effects at all. Some side effects are the brain getting used to a medicine

r pharmacist or GP for advice. None of the clinicians in MAS work for the service

arefully. dab dry with a cloth each time. Take it off very gently. Do not shave or use alcohol nage the top layer of skin. Put some moisturisers on the skin after the patch has
otions for the skin rash. This helps any dryness, scales or cracks. Antihistamines ne lotion can help the itchiness. If the rash is severe, some steroid creams or u must see your GP before using them.
e to take paracetamol with any other medicines you are taking.
a problem, contact your GP or pharmacist for advice.
and lie or sit down if you feel it coming on. A change in dose may help. Discuss this
od. If it is bad, contact your GP. It may be possible to adjust your dose.
Drink plenty of water. Get advice from your pharmacist. If it lasts for more than a
an a week after starting rivastigmine, tell your GP. Sometimes changing the time of elp.

ontact your doctor immediately.

ufacturer's Patient Information Leaflet (PIL). You may find more on the internet but beware as internet- vill help you compare the main medicines for each condition, how they work and their side effects. Go se Ltd (www.choiceandmedication.org). Choice and Medication™ indemnity applies only to licensed subscribing organisations

Will it affect my other medication?

Rivastigmine has few possible interactions with other medicines. The main ones ir

- Rivastigmine can increase the effect of betablockers (e.g. propranolol, atenolol;

What sort of side-effects might I get if I am taking rivastigmine patche

This table shows some of the most common side effects and any you might need t the full list of possible side effects but do not be worried by this. Some people get and these usually wear off in a few days or weeks.

If you have side effects or concerns regarding rivastigmine you should contact you every day so we are unable to respond to medication queries in a timely fashion.

COMMON (fewer than about 1 in 10 people might get these)	
Irritant dermatitis A rash just where the patch has been (usually has a perfect outline of the patch)	**Follow the instructions very c** Wash the skin gently first and rubs on the skin – this can dam been removed.
Allergic dermatitis A skin rash spreading out from where the patch has been	Use moisturising creams and l (such as cetirizine) and calamin ointments can be used, but yo
Headache When your head is painful and pounding.	Ask your pharmacist if it is safe
Loss of appetite Not feeling hungry.	You may lose weight. If this is
Dizziness Feeling light-headed and faint.	Don't stand up too quickly. Try with your GP.
Nausea and vomiting Feeling sick and being sick.	Take the dose with or after foo
Diarrhoea Going to the toilet more than usual.	Passing loose, watery stools. D day, contact your GP.
Sleep disturbances You can't sleep very well and may have nightmares.	If you feel like this for more th day you apply the patch can h

RARE but important (can be serious if not dealt with quickly)	
Seizures Having a fit or convulsion.	Stop taking rivastigmine and c

The small print: This leaflet is to help you understand about your medicine. You must also read the manu based information is not always accurate. Do not share medicines with anyone else. The 'Handy charts' v to our website for fuller answers to these and many other questions. V07.01 [8-2016] ©2016 Mistura™ Enterpris

Some dos and don'ts

- Always put a new patch in a different place to the last one
- Only wear one patch at a time. Don't forget to take the old one off before adding a new one
- If you do end up with two, take the older one off and leave the newer on in place
- Replace it with a new one after 24 hours
- Don't let the patch get too hot for a long time or it might release more rivastigmine
- If a patch falls off, put a new one on for the rest of the day, then replace it at the usual time the next day
- Avoid places where the patch can be rubbed off by tight clothing.

What should I do if I forget to apply a rivastigmine patch at the right time?

- If you have not applied a patch for 3 days, do not apply the next one before you have talked to your GP.
- You might have to start again at a lower dose.
- Do not try to catch up by adding an extra patch, as you will get more side effects.

How long will rivastigmine take to work?

- Rivastigmine usually starts to work in a couple of weeks or so.

Is it addictive and can I stop suddenly?

- There are no known problems stopping rivastigmine suddenly (e.g. before surgery) but the benefits are then lost
- There might be a rapid decline down to where you would have been without the rivastigmine
- This may occur even days or weeks after rivastigmine has been stopped.

Can I drive or cycle while I am having rivastigmine?

- Until you know how it affects you, do not drive or operate machinery.