



Cardiac Rehabilitation Team Using Glyceryl Trinitrate (GTN) Tablets

What is Glyceryl Trinitrate?

Glyceryl Trinitrate is used to treat chest pain in angina and can be used to prevent chest pain occurring if taken before certain activities or exercise.

Chest pain caused by angina occurs when the heart muscle does not get enough oxygen. Oxygen is delivered by the blood to the muscle through blood vessels called coronary arteries. The GTN widens the blood vessels to allow a greater amount of blood flow and hence oxygen through to feed the heart muscle.

What does it look like?

Glyceryl Trinitrate (GTN) is available as a small white tablet.

What to do if you have chest pain

1. Sit down and try to relax
2. Place one tablet under your tongue and allow 5 minutes for it to work
3. After 5 minutes, if you still have chest pain, place another tablet under your tongue and wait for another 5 minutes

If after 10 minutes you still have the pain, try to stay calm, relax and dial 999 for an ambulance

Do not drive while experiencing angina symptoms

Tell your GP if you experience any of the following:

- Pain or angina symptoms while you are resting
- Increased use of the spray
- Symptoms returning easily after being relieved with the spray

Things to remember

- Keep your tablets in the bottle with the silver lined top
- Keep the top on tightly
- Label the bottle with the date you opened it

Once opened, you should replace your tablets every 8 weeks. Your old tablets should be given to your pharmacist. Fresh tablets should produce a slight tingling sensation when placed under the tongue. If this does not happen, obtain a fresh supply of tablets.

Information for Patients

- Always take your tablets with you wherever you go, but avoid getting them too warm
- GTN tablets may give some people a headache, this is temporary
- If your pain disappears quickly after taking your GTN then you can either swallow the tablet or take it out of your mouth

References:

NICE Guidelines 73 – Management of Stable Angina

If you require this information in another format, such as a different language, large print, braille or audio version please ask a member of staff or email patientexperience@uhb.nhs.uk.