

# Liraglutide

Medication Information Leaflet

## What is this medication for?

Liraglutide is used to control diabetes. It works by reducing your feeling of wanting to eat food, hence helping you to lose weight. It also helps to increase the insulin made by your body when your blood sugar is high and decrease the sugar made by your liver.

## How should I take/use this medication?

Liraglutide should be injected into the fat layer of the skin on your upper arms, thigh, or tummy (abdomen). It is not to be injected into the veins or into the muscles. Inject the dose told by your doctor, nurse or pharmacist. Read the product information leaflet on how to inject this medication.

## What should I do if I forget to take/use this medication?

If you forget a dose, use the injection as soon as you remember. However, if it is more than 12 hours since you should have injected this medication, skip the missed dose. Then inject the next dose as usual the following day. Do not inject an extra dose or increase the dose on the following day to make up for the missed dose.

## What precautions should I take?

This medication should not be used if you have type 1 diabetes (your body does not produce any insulin) or a condition called diabetic ketoacidosis (increase in ketones in blood or urine).

This medication does not replace insulin.

Inform your doctor if:

- you are allergic to this medication or any of the other ingredients of this medication.
- you are pregnant, planning to get pregnant
- you are breastfeeding
- you have a heart condition, kidney or liver problem
- you have stomach or intestinal problems, gastroparesis (a condition where there is delayed stomach emptying) or inflammatory bowel disease
- you have thyroid problems

## What are some side-effects that I need to seek medical advice immediately?

Pancreatitis (inflammation of the pancreas) is a rare and serious side effect of this medication.

You should stop taking your medicine and check with your doctor immediately if you have these symptoms:

- Very bad pain in the stomach, abdomen or back area
- Nausea or vomiting that does not go away
- Fever

## What are some other side-effects of this medication?

The most common side effects are nausea and diarrhea. Some patients may also experience a decrease in appetite, stomach pain, vomiting, constipation. These side effects often get better in a few days or weeks, hence you are advised to continue taking the medicine. However, please speak to your doctor or pharmacist if the side effects continue or are very serious.

Another common side effect is low blood sugar, especially if Liraglutide is used together with other diabetes medicines like sulfonylureas (e.g. Glipizide, Gliclazide).

Symptoms of low blood sugar are weakness, dizziness, hunger, sweating, trembling, blurred vision, unsteady walk or fast heartbeat.

If you experience any of these low blood sugar symptoms, do the following immediately:

Step 1: Check your blood sugar level with a home blood sugar meter (glucometer) if available. If your blood sugar level is less than 4 mmol/L, take 15 grams of sugar such as:

- 3 glucose tablets or
- Half a glass of fruit juice or
- 3 teaspoons of sugar, honey or syrup

Step 2: You should feel better in about 15 minutes. If you have a home blood sugar meter, you should check your blood sugar level again.

Step 3: If your blood sugar level is still less than 4 mmol/L or you still have symptoms of low blood sugar, you should take another 15 grams of sugar.

If your symptoms still do not get better, see a doctor or go to the hospital immediately.

You may also experience some mild bruising, pain, irritation, itching and rash at the injection site.

## What food or medication should I avoid when I take this medication?

Avoid taking alcohol with this medicine.

## How should I store this medication?

Keep all new, unopened injections in a refrigerator between 2 to 8 degrees Celsius. Do not freeze. Once you have started using the injection, you can choose to continue storing them in the fridge, or at room temperature (below 30 degrees Celsius). Keep the cap on the injection to protect the medicine from light. Keep this medication out of reach of children. Throw away the injection 4 weeks after opening.

## How do I handle this medication safely?

Make sure that your liraglutide injection appears clear and colourless/almost colourless before use. Do not use if it has been frozen accidentally. Ensure the needles are suitable for use with the injection.

## How should I dispose of this medication safely?

Throw away this injection, along with the needle, into a metal tin or glass jar to so that you won't get any injuries from getting pricked by the needle accidentally. If used at the hospital, your healthcare provider will dispose the injection and needle in an appropriate sharps container.

### Disclaimers

If you take more than the recommended dose, please seek medical advice immediately. The information provided on this page does not replace information from your healthcare professional. Please consult your healthcare professional for more information.

*This article is jointly developed by members of the National Medication Information workgroup. The workgroup consists of cluster partners (National Healthcare Group, National University Health System and SingHealth), community pharmacies (Guardian, Unity and Watsons) and Pharmaceutical Society of Singapore.*

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