

Imodium

Oxford Pelvic Floor Centre: www.oxfordpelvicfloor.co.uk

Instruction for patients seen in the Oxford Pelvic Floor Centre

What is imodium?

Imodium (a trade name for loperamide) is an anti-diarrhoeal medicine.

What is it used for?

Imodium is used for a range of problems including travellers' diarrhoea. However, our main use of it in the pelvic floor service is in trying to improve bowel function and control (continence).

How does it improve bowel control?

Many people who have problems with bowel control (incontinence) have loose bowel motions or find that their problem is worse if their motions are loose. Taking imodium will make motions firmer/ drier and therefore easier to control. Imodium has also been shown to have other effects including tightening the sphincter muscle of the bottom and in altering reflexes between the bowel and the sphincter muscle.

How should I use the Imodium?

Your doctor will advise you on how to use the medicine. The main aim is to try to get the motions firmer, without getting constipated. In some patients, this will require very little Imodium. When starting to use Imodium, you should start with a very low dose and try this for a week. If it has no effect, then you can increase the dose slowly until it has an effect on firming the motions and improving control. If you think you are getting constipated or are unable to open your bowels, you should stop taking the Imodium. You should aim to find a regular dose of Imodium that controls your symptoms without making you excessively constipated.

What if I only need a tiny amount?

Sometimes patients find that they only need to take as little as one tablet (2mg) every other day. If you find you require only a very low dose, you may find Imodium syrup more convenient as it is easier to regulate the dose. The syrup form of the drug, however, requires a prescription.

Is Imodium safe?

Imodium is widely used by patients with incontinence but should be used only on medical advice. You should always read the label and a list of the interactions and safety advice will be found in the drug information leaflet within the box.

Do I have to take it every day?

If you are taking it because of incontinence, then you might decide just to take it on odd occasions when your bowels are particularly loose. Alternatively, you might choose to take it only when you are going out for the day and are afraid that you might be unable to get to a toilet quickly. You should find the dose and method of taking Imodium that best suits you.

What is the maximum amount that I should take?

You should not take more than eight tablets (16mg) per day unless instructed otherwise by your doctor.

Always Read the Label. This information sheet is intended for patients of the Oxford Pelvic Floor Centre only.

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