

## Patient Information

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### Antidepressants for Stroke patients

These drugs are used to treat depressive illness. Around 45% of stroke patients suffer some form of depression. Depression in stroke responds well to treatment with selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs). The treatment is usually continued for up to one year post stroke (after a stroke) under the guidance of the physician.

#### What are the potential risks and side effects?

All drugs have side effects; the more common effects include nausea, diarrhoea, tiredness, dry mouth and impotence. Less common effects include sweating, loss of appetite, tremor, agitation, watery nose and low libido.

#### How will I feel after I start taking the drug?

You should not feel any different, however if you start to suffer any of the side effects noted above then you should contact your GP.

The full effect and benefits of these drugs will not be obvious for up to two weeks after commencing treatment.

#### Sources of information

**Stroke Association**  
Helpline: 0845 30 33 100  
[www.stroke.org.uk](http://www.stroke.org.uk)

**Your GP**

**NHS Direct**  
Telephone 0845 4647  
[www.nhsdirect.uk](http://www.nhsdirect.uk)

#### Important information

The information in this leaflet is for guidance purposes only and is not provided to replace professional clinical advice from a qualified practitioner.

#### Your comments

We are always interested to hear your views about our leaflets. If you have any comments please contact our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) – details below.

#### Hand hygiene

The trust is committed to maintaining a clean, safe environment. Hand hygiene is very important in controlling infection. Alcohol gel is widely available at the patient bedside for staff use and at the entrance of each clinical area for visitors to clean their hands before and after entering.

#### Other formats

This information is available in alternative formats such as large print or electronically on request. Interpreters can also be booked. Please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) offices, found in the main reception areas:

#### Conquest Hospital

Email: [palsh@esht.nhs.uk](mailto:palsh@esht.nhs.uk) - Telephone: **01424 758090**

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### Eastbourne District General Hospital

Email: **palse@esht.nhs.uk** - Telephone: **01323 435886**

After reading this information are there any questions you would like to ask? Please list below and ask your nurse or doctor.

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### Reference

The following clinicians have been consulted and agreed this patient information:  
Dr MJH Rahmani, Consultant Lead in Stroke at Conquest Hospital, Hastings  
Dr LCA Conrad, Consultant Lead in Stroke at Eastbourne District General Hospital  
Jane Gallagher, Stroke Specialist Nurse (Information Originator)

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