

Diltiazem hydrochloride 2% cream

This leaflet will answer some of your questions about using diltiazem hydrochloride 2% cream to treat your anal fissure. Please read this leaflet carefully before you start using the cream. We recommend keeping the leaflet in a safe place as you might need to refer to it again. This information is not intended to replace your doctor's advice. If you have any questions or concerns, please speak to a doctor or nurse caring for you. This leaflet should be read with any information from the medicine manufacturer.

What diltiazem hydrochloride 2% cream is used for

It is used to promote the healing and reduce symptoms of an anal fissure. An anal fissure is a tear in the skin of the lower half of the anal canal (back passage). Symptoms can include severe and sharp pain, irritation and tenderness.

Certain fissures might heal quite quickly, but others can take several months to heal.

Diltiazem hydrochloride works by relaxing the muscle around the anus (the anal sphincter). This reduces pressure and increases blood flow to the area to allow healing to occur.

Taking an unlicensed or 'off-label' medicine

Diltiazem is licensed in the UK for the treatment of angina and hypertension, and is available as tablets and capsules to be taken orally (by mouth). It is not licensed for the treatment of anal fissure, however doctors have found that diltiazem hydrochloride 2% cream works well to treat anal fissure.

The leaflet, **Unlicensed Medicines – A Guide for Patients**, has more information about unlicensed or 'off-label' medicines. If you would like a copy, please ask your doctor, nurse or pharmacist. Alternatively, you can call the pharmacy medicines helpline (details at the end of this leaflet).

Before starting treatment

If the answer to any of the questions below is 'yes', please tell your doctor or pharmacist before using diltiazem hydrochloride 2% cream.

- are you allergic to diltiazem or any other ingredients in this preparation (see list at the end of the leaflet)?
- are you pregnant or breastfeeding?
- do you have any heart problems?
- are you taking any medicines to reduce blood pressure?
- are you taking other medicines containing diltiazem, for example to treat high blood pressure or other heart conditions?

How to use diltiazem hydrochloride 2% cream

- Wash your hands before and after you use the cream to ensure hygiene is maintained.
- Put about 2-2.5cm (1 inch) of the cream on your finger.
- Apply the cream just inside and around your anus as instructed by your doctor. A finger covering such as cling film, disposable glove or finger cot can be used to apply the cream (you can get finger cots from a local pharmacy or surgical supplies retailer).
- Use the cream two times a day (morning and evening) or as directed by your doctor.
- Try to make sure you have opened your bowels (had a poo) before using the cream. This is so that the cream can be in contact with the rectal tissue for as long as possible.

Please note: This product is for external use only. DO NOT take it by mouth.

How long diltiazem hydrochloride 2% cream should be used for

Your doctor will let you know how long you should continue treatment for. In most cases this will be 6-8 weeks. If your symptoms have not resolved during this time, you might need to go back to your doctor for a further review.

How you can get more cream

Diltiazem hydrochloride 2% cream treatment usually lasts 6-8 weeks. As it has an expiry of 4 weeks once it has been opened, the hospital will supply you with 2 tubes to allow you to complete the course. If your symptoms have not resolved after the course is complete, you should go back to your GP for a review, unless you have a follow-up hospital appointment already booked.

Side effects

All medicines have side effects which affect some people who take them. The most common side effects (which occur in less than one out of every 10 patients) are:

- headaches – these will usually be mild and can be treated with simple painkillers (such as paracetamol). If the headache does not resolve or is unpleasant, please consult your pharmacist or doctor.
- light-headedness or dizziness, especially when getting up from a sitting or lying down position. If you begin to feel dizzy, sit or lie down until the feeling passes.
- local itching, soreness or rectal bleeding.

Speak to your doctor or pharmacist if any of the above side effects continue or become troublesome, or if you experience any other symptoms which you think might be due to this medicine.

How to store diltiazem hydrochloride 2% cream

- Store diltiazem hydrochloride 2% cream in a refrigerator (between 2-8C), away from direct heat and light.
- Do not use diltiazem hydrochloride 2% cream after 4 weeks of opening or after the expiry date on the tube, whichever comes first. Return any unused cream to your local pharmacy who will dispose of it safely.
- Keep all medicines out of the sight and reach of children.
- Do not share your medicine with anyone else, even if their symptoms appear similar to yours.

Other information

As well as the active ingredient diltiazem hydrochloride, this cream also contains cetostearyl alcohol, Ceatereth-20, white soft paraffin, liquid paraffin EP, phenoxyethanol and purified water.

Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns about your immediate dentures, please call the hospital switchboard, **tel:** 020 7188 7188 and ask to speak to the department you were treated in.

For more information leaflets on conditions, procedures, treatments and services offered at our hospitals, please visit **web:** www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk/leaflets

Pharmacy Medicines Helpline

If you have any questions or concerns about your medicines, please speak to the staff caring for you or call our helpline, **tel:** 020 7188 8748, Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm, **email:** mymedicines@gstt.nhs.uk

Your comments and concerns

For advice, support or to raise a concern, contact our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS), **tel:** 020 7188 8801, **email:** pals@gstt.nhs.uk. To make a complaint, contact the complaints department, **tel:** 020 7188 3514, **email:** complaints2@gstt.nhs.uk

Language and accessible support services

If you need an interpreter or information about your care in a different language or format, please get in touch, **tel:** 020 7188 8815, **email:** languagesupport@gstt.nhs.uk

NHS 111

This service offers medical help and advice from fully trained advisers supported by experienced nurses and paramedics. Available over the phone 24 hours a day, **tel:** 111, **web:** www.111.nhs.uk

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