

Discharge Instructions: Taking Diuretics

Your doctor prescribed a type of medication called a diuretic for you. Diuretics help reduce the amount of water in the body. They make you urinate more frequently, flushing water and salts from your body. Diuretics are a treatment for high blood pressure (hypertension) and other conditions.

The name of your diuretic is _____

Home Care

- Follow the fact sheet that came with your medication. It tells you when and how to take your medication. Ask for a sheet if you didn't get one.
- Tell your doctor if you are taking any other medications, including herbal remedies or over-the-counter drugs.
- Plan your activities in advance until you know how this drug affects you.
- Take your diuretic in the morning. This drug makes you urinate more. If you take it in the morning, you may not need to use the bathroom during the night. That way, the medication won't interfere with a good night's sleep.
- Take your medication exactly as directed, even if you feel fine.
- Learn to take your own pulse. Keep a record of your results. Ask your doctor which readings mean that you need medical attention.

Possible Side Effects

Tell your doctor if you have any of these side effects. Don't stop taking the medication until your doctor tells you to. Mild side effects include the following:

- Dizziness or lightheadedness
- Headache
- Loss of appetite
- Diarrhea
- Increased sensitivity to light
- Nervousness
- Stomach cramps with mild pain

When to Call Your Doctor

Call your doctor right away if you have any of the following:

- Blood in your urine or stool or black, tarry stool
- Cough or hoarseness
- Fever or chills
- Lower back or side pain, or muscle cramps or pain
- Trouble urinating or pain when you urinate
- Pinpoint red spots on skin
- Ringing or buzzing in your ears or any hearing loss
- Skin rash or hives
- Severe stomach pain with nausea and vomiting
- Unusual bleeding or bruising
- Yellow vision or yellowing of your eyes or skin (jaundice)
- Increased thirst
- Irregular heartbeat or weak pulse