



GTN spray

Information for patients from Medicines Information

Your doctor has prescribed you GTN spray. This leaflet explains how to use and care for your spray.

Please use these instructions alongside advice from your doctor, pharmacist, or specialist nurse.

What is GTN spray?

Glycerol Trinitrate or GTN spray belongs to a group of medicines called nitrates. It widens the blood vessels, which increases blood flow to the heart.

What is GTN spray used for?

GTN spray relieves chest pain and discomfort from angina at the onset of an angina attack. Angina is a heart condition caused by restricted blood flow to the heart.

How do I use GTN spray?

1. Before you use the spray for the first time

- Prime the pump by releasing a test spray.
- If you do not use the spray regularly, repeat the test spray each time to make sure the pump is working properly.

2. Using the spray

- Sit down and stay calm. This will reduce the stress on your heart and minimize your risk of feeling faint.
- **Do not use the spray near heat, an open flame, or while smoking.**
- Remove the plastic cap from the spray. **Do not shake the container.**
- Hold the pump upright and near your mouth, with your forefinger on the top of the grooved button.

- Aim the spray under your tongue.
- Press the button firmly with your forefinger to release the spray 1 to 2 times. Try not to inhale the spray.
- Close your mouth immediately after spraying. Do not spit out the spray or rinse your mouth for 5 to 10 minutes.

3. How will I feel afterwards?

- You may feel a warm tingling sensation, which is normal.
- Within a few minutes you should feel relief from your chest pain or discomfort.

4. What if my pain continues after using the spray?

- If you still have pain or discomfort after 3 to 5 minutes, repeat the process with another 1 to 2 sprays.
- Call 999 immediately, if:
 - you do not experience pain relief within a few minutes of taking the second dose; or
 - your pain gets worse.

5. What should I do after using the spray?

- Rest for a moment.
- When you stand up, do so slowly to avoid feeling faint or dizzy.

Can I use GTN spray to prevent an attack?

If you know what brings on your angina, you can use GTN spray to prevent an attack. However, if you find that you are frequently using your spray, this may mean your condition is getting worse. If this happens, please have your prescription reviewed by your doctor.

What are the possible side effects?

The most common side effect is a headache, this should soon pass.

Important things to remember

- Tell your doctor or pharmacist about any new medications or supplements you are taking. Some drugs and over-the-counter medicines or supplements may interact with GTN.
- Always keep a spare GTN spray handy, as it may be difficult to tell how many doses are left in the pump.
- You can buy GTN medicines from a pharmacy without a prescription if needed.

How do I store my GTN spray?

- Store the spray upright.
- Check the spray regularly to make sure it is within the expiry date and the pump is not empty. GTN spray typically has a three-year expiry period. **Do not use out-of-date medicines.**
- Always keep a spare GTN spray handy, as it may be difficult to tell how many doses are left in the pump.

Additional information

- Stay safe and make sure you follow the guidelines for effective use of your GTN spray.
- Speak to your doctor, pharmacist, or specialist nurse if you have any further questions.
- Read the patient information leaflet that came with your prescription.

For more information on using your GTN spray, please watch the following YouTube video **GTN spray for angina counselling**. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rqVGsbvcNgc>)

This leaflet has been produced with and for patients.

Please let us know:

- If you have any accessibility needs; this includes needing a hearing loop or wanting someone to come with you to your appointment.
- If you need an interpreter.
- If you need this information in another format (such as Braille, audio, large print or Easy Read).

You can let us know this by:

- Visiting the Trust web site (<https://www.ekhuft.nhs.uk/ais>).
- Calling the number at the top of your appointment letter.
- Adding this information to the Patient Portal (<https://pp.ekhuft.nhs.uk/login>).
- Telling a member of staff at your next appointment.

Any complaints, comments, concerns or compliments, please speak to a member of your healthcare team. Or contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service on 01227 783145 or email (ekh-tr.pals@nhs.net).

Patients should not bring large sums of money or valuables into hospital. Please note that East Kent Hospitals accepts no responsibility for the loss or damage to personal property, unless the property has been handed into Trust staff for safe-keeping.

Further patient information leaflets are available via the East Kent Hospitals' web site (<https://www.ekhuft.nhs.uk/patient-information>).

Reference number: Web 727b

First published:
October 2024

Last reviewed:
October 2024

Next review date:
February 2028

Copyright © East Kent Hospitals University NHS Foundation Trust.