PATIENT INFORMATION LEAFLET
Weight loss - Orlistat 120mg

Your Pharmacist can supply Orlistat 120mg tablets for weight loss. Orlistat 120mg is normally available only on prescription.

Up to four out of ten people taking Orlistat 120mg together with diet lose 10% of their weight in a year.

Orlistat 120mg contains the active ingredient orlistat. Another weight loss tablet called Alli also contains orlistat, but at half the dose of Orlistat 120mg.

Suitability

You will need to complete a form before your Pharmacist can supply Orlistat 120mg to you.

Only people who are significantly overweight qualify for Orlistat 120mg. Your Pharmacist will check your body mass index (BMI). BMI is a measure of your weight compared to your height. If your BMI is over 28 you may be able to receive Orlistat 120mg.

Targets

When you start taking Orlistat 120mg you will be given a weight loss target for the first 3 months. This target is 5% of your weight. If you succeed in losing 5% of your weight, you will be eligible to continue taking Orlistat 120mg. Pharmacists can supply Orlistat 120mg for up to two years.

Each time Orlistat 120mg is supplied your Pharmacist will check your weight. If your weight goes up in any three months, Orlistat 120mg will need to be stopped. If you lose enough weight for your BMI to fall below 28, Orlistat 120mg can no longer be supplied.

Some people do not succeed in losing weight with Orlistat 120mg. These people should not be disheartened. They can have a break of 6 months and try again later, or see a doctor or a weight loss clinic as alternatives. Losing weight, like many things that are hard to achieve, takes perseverance and resolve, so do not give up.

Orlistat 120mg

Orlistat 120mg capsules are taken three times daily with water immediately before, during or up to one hour after each main meal. If meals are missed or contain no fat then a dose of Orlistat 120mg can be left off.

Orlistat 120mg works by reducing the amount of fat absorbed into the body from our food. Some fat passes straight through the digestive system without being absorbed whilst Orlistat 120mg is being taken. Orlistat 120mg should not be taken with high fat meals (cream cakes, fish and chips, etc) as this causes abdominal discomfort and diarrhoea.

Orlistat 120mg should not be taken more than three times daily. Taking Orlistat 120mg more than three times daily would produce side-effects and will not improve weight loss.

Side effects

Side effects of taking Orlistat 120mg are usually mild and are not experienced by all people. Common side-effects include; headache, abdominal pain/discomfort, urgent or increased need to open the bowels, flatulence (wind) with discharge, oily discharge, oily or fatty stools, liquid stools, low blood sugar levels (experienced by some people with type 2 diabetes).

Reducing the amount of fat in the diet is likely to reduce the digestive side-effects.

Cautions

Inform your doctor if you are taking Orlistat 120mg, particularly if your doctor prescribes a new medication.

If Orlistat 120mg causes diarrhoea it may prevent the contraceptive pill from being effective and alternative contraception may be required.

Bleeding from the rectum, if it occurs, should be reported to a doctor. This is unlikely to occur.

It is important to have a good mixed diet containing fruit and vegetables whilst taking Orlistat 120mg. Orlistat 120mg can reduce the absorption of some vitamins. If your diet is not rich and varied, a daily multivitamin tablet should be taken.

People taking regular prescription medicine who lose large amounts of weight should consult their doctor in case dosages need to be changed. Diabetic medication and cholesterol lowering medication, in particular, may need adjusting.

Losing weight

Losing weight requires lowering calorie intake and increasing activity. Orlistat 120mg helps, however lifestyle changes are also needed. Your Pharmacist can give you a leaflet called 'How to Lose Weight the Healthy Way'.

Tips for weight loss

Set realistic weight loss goals – aim for 5-10kg (11-22lbs) over three months. This is around 0.5kg (1.1lbs) a week, but reduce this target if it seems too difficult. Eat regular meals and try reducing the size of your portions. Contact a local slimming club if you think this may help you. Tell your friends and family that you are trying to lose weight, as they can help motivate you. Drink less alcohol, as this is high in calories. Consider using a food diary to keep track of the amount of calories you are eating, and the changes you are making to your diet. Take regular light exercise, starting off slowly and building up activity.

Foods

Meals based on starchy, high-fibre carbohydrates, such as wholegrain bread, pasta and rice are usually lower in calories than fatty or greasy foods. Eat at least five portions of fruit and vegetables every day. Include a moderate amount of low-fat protein, milk and dairy products in your diet. A balanced diet should contain only small amounts of foods that are high in fat, sugar or salt.

Further Information

Information about losing weight: NHS Choices website www.nhs.uk/livewell/loseweight/

Information about Orlistat 120mg manufacturer’s Patient Information Leaflet (Xenical from Roche)
www.medicines.org.uk/emc/medicine/4417/XPIL/

Patient Survey

We would greatly value your feedback on this service. You could also win £100 in our prize draw!
Visit www.pharmacypgd.co.uk/survey or scan the QR code with your smartphone.