

# [1]Nifedipine Nifemed®

## About nifedipine

Nifedipine is used to treat hypertension (high blood pressure) and angina (chest pain). Angina occurs when the heart muscle does not receive enough oxygen. Nifedipine can also be used to treat Raynaud's phenomenon, a condition caused by bad circulation (lack of blood) to the hands and feet. Nifedipine works by relaxing and opening up the blood vessels. This allows blood to circulate more freely around the body, lowering blood pressure, increasing the flow of blood to the extremities and improving the efficiency of the heart.

Type of medicine	Calcium channel blocker
Used for	Hypertension (high blood pressure) Angina (chest pain) Raynaud's phenomenon (a circulation problem)
Also called	Nifemed
Available as	Tablets Capsules

## Before taking nifedipine

Before taking nifedipine make sure your doctor or pharmacist knows:

- Ⓣ If you are pregnant, trying for a baby or breast-feeding.
- Ⓣ If you suffer from liver problems.
- Ⓣ If you suffer from diabetes.
- Ⓣ If you suffer from porphyria.
- Ⓣ If you have suffered from a heart attack less than one month ago.
- Ⓣ If you have heart failure.
- Ⓣ If you have any other heart problems.
- Ⓣ If you suffer from unstable angina (chest pain at rest as well as during exercise)
- Ⓣ If you have a blockage in the gut or suffer from inflammatory bowel disease.

## How to take nifedipine

- Ⓣ Swallow nifedipine whole with a glass of water. Do not break or crush modified release formulations that are designed to release drug slowly over time, to give a more even effect. If you do, too much nifedipine may be absorbed too quickly from the gut causing unpleasant side effects such as dizziness and fainting.
- Ⓣ Do not stop taking nifedipine without speaking to your doctor first as this may worsen your condition and cause you to suffer an angina attack.
- Ⓣ If you miss a dose of nifedipine take it as soon as you remember. However, if it is almost time for your next dose, skip the missed dose and continue taking it at the usual times. Never take two doses at the same time to compensate. If in doubt speak with your doctor or pharmacist.

## Getting the most from your treatment

- ⑩ Take your medicine either with food or without food. Try to be consistent, if you normally take it with food do this every time, if you take it on an empty stomach do this every time.
- ⑩ Do not drink grapefruit juice while you are being treated with nifedipine as this can increase the amount of nifedipine in your blood.
- ⑩ Keep your regular appointments with your doctor so your blood pressure and pulse can be checked
- ⑩ If you are taking a modified-release version of nifedipine you should use the same brand of nifedipine each time you get a new prescription. This is because different formulations can have slightly different effects. If your medicine or packaging looks different to before speak to your pharmacist.
- ⑩ The outer coating of some of the modified-release preparations may pass through the gut intact and you may see it in your stools, however this does not stop the medicine from working.

## Can nifedipine cause problems

Along with their useful effects all medicines can cause unwanted side effects, which usually improve as your body adjusts to the new medicine. Speak with your doctor or pharmacist if any of the following side effects continue or become troublesome.

Other side effects include a rash, itching, feeling sick, increased need to pass urine, eye pain, problems with vision, gum problems, pins and needles, muscle pain, shaking, problems with erection, enlarged breasts, jaundice (yellowing of the skin)

## **Common side-effects    What can I do if I experience this**

Palpitations	This usually only occurs after starting treatment for a few weeks and then gets better. If it is severe or continues consult your doctor.
Constipation	Constipation can often be eased by eating plenty of fibre, such as fruit, green leafy vegetables, bran and drinking 6-8 glasses of water each day. If it continues or becomes a problem then consult your doctor or pharmacist.
Headache	If this happens a suitable pain-killer may be recommended by your pharmacist. If it continues or becomes a problem then consult your doctor.
Dizziness	This usually only occurs after starting treatment for a few weeks and then gets better. Stand up slowly from sitting and laying positions. If it continues or becomes a problem then consult your doctor.
Water retention (oedema)	Swelling of the legs may occur due to fluid retention. Raise your legs when sitting as often as possible. Consult your doctor if this continues or becomes a problem.
Lethargy	Try to get plenty of sleep and light exercise to help. Consult your doctor if this continues.

## **How to store nifedipine**

- ⑩ Keep all medicines out of the reach of children.
- ⑩ Store in a cool, dry place below 25°C, away from direct heat and light.

## **Important information about all medicines**

- ⑩ Keep all medicines out of the sight and reach of children.
- ⑩ Make sure that the person prescribing this medicine knows about any other medicines that you are taking. This includes medicines you buy and herbal and homeopathic medicines.
- ⑩ If you buy any medicines check with a pharmacist that they are safe to take with your other medicines.
- ⑩ Before taking this medicine tell your doctor if you have ever had an allergic reaction after taking any medicine.
- ⑩ Never take more than the prescribed dose. If you suspect that you or someone else has taken an overdose of this medicine go to the accident and emergency department of your local hospital at once. Always take the container with you, if possible, even if it is empty.
- ⑩ If you are having any treatment like an operation or dental treatment tell the person carrying out the treatment which medicines you are taking.
- ⑩ Always read the printed information leaflet that comes with your medicine.
- ⑩ This medicine is for you. Never give it to other people even if their condition appears to be the same as yours.
- ⑩ Never keep out of date or unwanted medicines. Take them to your local pharmacy which will dispose of them for you.

If you have any questions about this medicine ask your pharmacist.