

Patient Information Leaflet

Morphine (Zomorph® or MST Continus® Suspension) taken via Enteral Feeding tubes

Name of the medicine:

Morphine sulfate

What is it for?

Morphine belongs to the group of medicines known as strong opioids. They are used to help control pain, breathlessness or cough.

Most medicines available in the UK have a licence for use. The licence describes the ways in which the medicine can be given and the conditions it can be used to treat. In order to get a licence, the manufacturer of the medicine has to show that it is safe and made to a high standard.

Use of morphine for breathlessness and cough is outside its licence. Medicines used in palliative care are quite often used in this way. There is experience and research to support the use of morphine in this way. The person who prescribed your medicine will have considered carefully the benefits for you.

We are providing you with this extra leaflet to tell you about the reason(s) why you are taking this medicine and to highlight other information. This should be read along with the manufacturer's patient information leaflet.

What form(s) of this medicine are there and how is it usually taken?

Your morphine will be either capsules known as Zomorph® or granules in a small sachet known as MST Continus® Suspension. These are a modified release (MR) or long acting form of morphine. MR medication is released slowly into your body to provide relief of pain, breathlessness or cough throughout the day and night. Each dose lasts for around twelve hours. MR morphine should be taken in the morning and 12 hours later in the evening to keep a stable level of medicine in your body.

If swallowing the medicine is not possible for you, you can give yourself this medicine using the feeding or enteral tube that you have. This involves using a plastic mixing pot, water and a syringe. The type of syringe you will be given is designed to fit into the connections to your feeding or enteral tube.

MST:

- Open the MST sachet, pour the granules into at least 10ml of water, and mix well.
- Pull the mixture into the enteral syringe, shake it well.
- Clean the connection to your tube, then flush the tube with some water.

- Connect the syringe with the morphine mixture and slowly push the plunger and the morphine into the tube making sure no granules are left in the syringe.
- Flush the tube again with some water.

You will have been shown how to do this.

Zomorph:

- Open the Zomorph capsule and mix the granules with some water.
- The mixture is given using a syringe via your tube in the same way as described above for MST.

What are the most common side effects I might experience?

You should contact your doctor or nurse if side-effects become troublesome. Some of the side-effects you may experience while you are taking morphine include:

- **Sleepiness:** This may happen when you first start to take morphine or when the dose is increased. It should improve after a period of time.
- **Dry mouth:** Try to keep your mouth and lips clean and moist. If your mouth becomes sore please see your healthcare professional for advice and help.
- **Sickness:** If you feel sick when you first start to take morphine, your prescriber may need to give you some anti-sickness medicine until the sickness goes away.
- **Constipation:** This is a common side-effect with morphine. Your prescriber will be able to prescribe a medicine to help you go to the toilet (laxative). It is also important to take plenty of fluids.

What other information should I know about this medicine?

What do I do if I forget to take a regular dose of long acting morphine?

Take a dose as soon as you remember. Do not take a double dose to make up for the missed one.

Will morphine always relieve my pain, breathlessness or cough completely?

Morphine is very good at helping to relieve pain, breathlessness or cough. It may not necessarily be effective for some of the causes of your symptoms. Other treatments may also be recommended by your prescriber.

Will I become addicted to strong opioids and be unable to stop taking them?

No. You may be aware that strong opioids are also used as a substitute medication for people with drug addiction. You have not been prescribed a strong opioid for this reason. You have been prescribed a strong opioid for relief of your pain, breathlessness or cough.

How will I know what problems to look for if the morphine is not working so well for my symptoms?

You may still experience symptoms even if your prescriber has increased the dose of morphine you take. You may feel unwell in one or more of these ways:

- more sleepy than usual
- feeling sick more of the time
- restlessness or jumpiness
- bad dreams
- confusion

Do not worry if this happens and do not stop taking your morphine suddenly. Tell your prescriber or a member of the team looking after you.

Can morphine interfere with my other medicines?

It is useful to remind your prescriber what other medicines you are taking so that they can adjust your other medicines if needed.

Can I drink alcohol?

It is best to avoid alcohol as it may make you feel very sleepy when taken with morphine.

Can I drive?

There is a risk of feeling drowsy when you are taking this medicine and it may affect your ability to drive safely. If this happens, do not drive. You should also not operate any machinery if you feel drowsy. For further information, please refer to the information leaflet provided via the link

<https://www.palliativecareguidelines.scot.nhs.uk/media/87338/strong-painkillers-and-driving-2020-10.pdf>

Repeat prescriptions

Order these from your GP surgery in good time so that you do not run out. Remember to re-order after dose changes as capsule or sachet strengths may also change.

Safe storage

Your medication needs to be kept in a safe place out of the reach of children. It needs to be stored in the original container. Return unused medication to a pharmacy.