

Long-term PPI use

Heartburn and dyspepsia

If you have been taking a PPI for more than eight weeks, when stopping we advise that you stop slowly. If you are on a high dose, ask your GP to prescribe a lower dose and take this dose daily for four weeks.

Lansoprazole 30mg →15mg

Omeprazole 40mg →20mg →10mg

Omeprazole 20mg→lansoprazole 15mg

When you have reached the lowest dose, you may be able to stop taking your PPI treatment every day. Talk to your doctor about which of the three 'treatment options' described overleaf would suit you best.

Stomach protection

When used for **stomach protection** whilst taking other medicines it may be suitable to reduce the dose but you **should not stop taking your PPI**.

Stomach protection

Lansoprazole 30mg →15mg

Omeprazole 20mg→lansoprazole 15mg

Worsening symptoms?

You should see your doctor if your symptoms do not get any better, get worse or if you develop any of the following;

- Vomiting, especially if this contains blood or material that looks like coffee grounds.
- Dark, sticky bowel movements
- Difficult or painful swallowing
- Unexplained weight loss
- Chest pain, that gets worse with or after exercise or that goes into your chin or left shoulder.

How can I improve my symptoms?

- Try to keep to a healthy weight
- Avoid food and drink that make symptoms worse (spicy or fatty foods, chocolate, coffee, cola drinks, orange juice and alcohol)
- Stop smoking; *contact your local pharmacy to find out about the local smoking cessation services available.*
- Eat meals at regular times
- Avoid large or late meals and avoid bending over or lying flat immediately after eating
- Avoid tight belts or clothing
- Eat and drink in moderation
- Avoid buying medications that can make your symptoms worse (ask your doctor or pharmacist which medicines are safe to take)
- Reduce stress - include some physical activity or relaxation every day.
- Raise the head of your bed by 10 to 15cm (4-6 inches) using blocks under the legs of your bed, or use a wedge-shaped pillow to raise your head.

Adapted for local use by NECS Medicines Optimisation Pharmacists (Copeland). Produced by the Lothian Primary Care Pharmacists in association with the Lothian Joint Formulary.

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COPELAND



Proton Pump Inhibitors (PPIs)

an information leaflet for patients

Lothian Joint Formulary
Supporting Excellent Prescribing
www.ljf.scot.nhs.uk

Proton Pump Inhibitors (PPIs)

PPIs work by reducing the amount of acid that your stomach makes.

PPIs help relieve symptoms of heartburn and indigestion.

PPIs can also be given to protect the stomach when taking some other medicines (for example anti-inflammatory drugs).

Heartburn is a painful burning sensation felt in the chest behind the breast bone. It is caused when some of the stomach acid splashes up into the oesophagus.

(the tube that carries food from your mouth to your stomach).



Dyspepsia is described as pain or discomfort in the stomach or upper abdomen.

The PPI medicines recommended for use in Cumbria are called:

- lansoprazole
- omeprazole

If acid has damaged your oesophagus, these drugs can help heal it.

Side-effects with PPIs

Side effects with Proton Pump Inhibitors include; abdominal pain, constipation, diarrhoea, nausea (feeling sick), headaches or a rash. Serious side effects are rare.

Some studies have suggested that these drugs may increase the chance of broken bones with long-term use and may increase the risk of developing gastro-intestinal infections.

Duration of PPI treatment

When used for the treatment of **heartburn and/or dyspepsia** courses are often short.

To begin with, a PPI is usually prescribed at the full dosage for four weeks. If your symptoms continue, then another four weeks of treatment may be prescribed.

When used for **stomach protection** whilst taking other medicines it may be suitable to reduce the dose but you **should not stop taking your PPI**.

Doctors in Cumbria are reviewing patients taking PPIs long-term to determine if they are still required and are reducing or stopping this medicine wherever possible.

Treatment options

After the initial course, treatment will be 'stepped down' to one of the following three options:

1 'Take when needed' treatment

A PPI is prescribed for you to take only when you have heartburn or dyspepsia. When the symptoms have been relieved (often after a few days) you stop taking the PPI.

2 Short courses of treatment

If your symptoms return, your doctor will prescribe another short course of PPI treatment (usually for 2-4 weeks).

3 Low dose treatment

The dose of PPI is reduced to the lowest effective dose, **or** a different medicine is used to keep your symptoms at bay.

Stopping your PPI

Some people find that when they stop taking their PPI their symptoms return. This is because if you take a PPI for more than a few weeks, your stomach will increase its ability to make acid. This means that for a short while after you stop taking your PPI the acid levels in your stomach may be higher than before you started treatment.

Speak to your pharmacist or GP as they can provide you with an antacid or other medicine which will relieve these symptoms.