

Information for Patients prescribed Linaclotide (Constella) Capsules

About Linaclotide

Linaclotide is a medication that can be helpful for people who have constipation or constipation associated with irritable bowel syndrome (IBS). It helps to increase bowel secretions and movement, making stools easier to pass. Abdominal discomfort and bloating may take six to eight weeks to improve.

Before starting Linaclotide

You should not take Linaclotide if you are pregnant, breast-feeding or trying to get pregnant or you are so constipated that you think you may have a blockage. Please inform your doctor if you have ever had an allergic reaction to a medicine.

Before you start this treatment, read the manufacturer's printed information leaflet from inside your pack. It will give you more information about Linaclotide and will provide you with a full list of the side-effects you may experience from taking it.

Contraceptive advice!

You may need to take additional precautions if you are taking the oral contraceptive pill. This is because you may experience diarrhoea when you start taking Linaclotide which may reduce the effectiveness of your contraceptive pill.

When to take Linaclotide

It is difficult to predict how you will respond to Linaclotide. It is advisable therefore to start treatment when you are at home so you can be near a toilet (such as at the weekend).

How to take Linaclotide

- Take one 290mcg capsule of Linaclotide once daily. Swallow the capsule whole with a drink of water. It is best taken on an empty stomach (which means at least 30 minutes before food). **Taking the capsules with food increases the possibility that diarrhoea will occur.**
- You can take your dose at a time of day that suits you, but try to take it at around the same time of day, each day.
- If you still take other laxative medication you may need to reduce or stop this when you start taking Linaclotide
- If you forget to take a dose, take it as soon as you remember on an empty stomach. If you do not remember until the following day, skip the forgotten dose. Do not take two doses at the same time to make up for a missed dose.

Common Side-effects

Most medicines can cause unwanted side-effects although not everyone experiences them. The table below lists some of the most common ones associated with Linaclotide. You will find a full list in the manufacturer's information leaflet supplied with your medicine. The unwanted effects often improve as your body adjusts to the new medicine, but speak with your doctor or pharmacist if any of the following continue or become troublesome.

| Side-effects | What can I do if I experience this? |
|------------------------------------|---|
| Diarrhoea | Drink plenty of water, and make sure that you take the capsules at least 30 minutes before food. If the diarrhoea is severe or continues for a week, stop taking the medication and restart when your symptoms settle. |
| Wind, tummy (abdominal) discomfort | If troublesome, speak with your doctor |
| Feeling dizzy | Do not drive or use tools or machines while you feel dizzy |

If you experience any other symptoms which you think may be due to the medicine, contact your doctor or pharmacist for further advice.

Medication review

We will arrange a telephone review of your progress on Linaclotide after 4 weeks. If your symptoms have improved we will ask your GP to continue to provide repeat prescriptions. You should be reassessed thereafter every 6-12 months.

Not all patients respond to treatment straight away so it is important that you continue taking Linaclotide for the full 4 week course.

If you do not respond to Linaclotide at first you may need to restart your usual laxative medication. If you are not currently taking any other laxative medication you may need to obtain some as 'rescue' medication. Please ask your specialist or GP for further advice.

Further Advice

Pelvic Floor Nurse Specialist
 Royal Shrewsbury Hospital
 01743 261083 (24hr answerphone)