

## Bucks Integrated Respiratory Service (BIRS)

A patient's guide to Oramorph (morphine sulphate oral solution 10mg/5ml) for use in breathlessness

### Why is Oramorph used?

Oramorph has been used as a treatment for breathlessness for many years and has proven to be effective and safe.

### What is Oramorph?

Oramorph is a liquid form of morphine, a drug which is often used as a pain killer. In small doses oramorph is used for the relief of long term or chronic breathlessness.

### Will it help?

Patients have told us they find it very helpful in relieving their breathlessness. Many say it has allowed them to sleep better and to cope better with daily activities.

### How does it work?

Oramorph works quickly to relieve the feeling of being breathless and does not linger in your system. You will be started on a small dose of oramorph 2-4 times a day and if this seems to help you the dose can be gradually increased. Once you have become used to it you can also take extra doses when you are breathless, or before doing activities that you know will make you breathless.

### What are the possible side effects?

As with all medicines there may be side effects which can include:-

- Constipation, which is why a gentle laxative is often prescribed whilst you are taking oramorph.
- Skin itching (mild).
- Drowsiness (rarely). If you do feel drowsy it is important that you do not drive.
- Itchiness and drowsiness usually go away over time and with continued use of oramorph.

### Some people may feel concerned at the thought of using morphine for a number of reasons:

Some people may recognize this as a medicine used for pain including when someone has cancer or is dying. This is absolutely not why oramorph is used for breathlessness.

## Patient advice sheet

Some people may think that using morphine will make you addicted. The small amount of morphine used to treat breathlessness does not cause addiction. The oramorph can be safely weaned and stopped if it does not benefit you, or if you no longer need it.

You might notice that the packet information leaflet includes a warning that states that it is dangerous to take oramorph when you have a breathing condition. This is only a potential problem if you need to take very large doses to treat pain. Oramorph is not dangerous in the low doses we prescribe for treating breathlessness.

### What happens if the Oramorph is not working for me?

It is important to let your doctor know if you feel that the oramorph is not helping as it may be that you need an alternative dose or medication.

**Buckinghamshire Integrated Respiratory Service (BIRS)**  
**The Annexe**  
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**Direct Dial: 01296 255670**  
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**Email: [buc-tr.birs@nhs.net](mailto:buc-tr.birs@nhs.net)**

**Monday to Friday – 8.15 to 18.30**  
**Weekends/Bank Holidays – 9.00 to 16.30**

**If you require medical advice out of hours please dial 111.**  
**In the event of an emergency please call 999.**

### Is oxygen a treatment for breathlessness?

No, oxygen is used to correct low oxygen levels and reduce strain on your heart and lungs. You can have a normal oxygen level and be very breathless which is why we use other treatments for breathlessness like oramorph.

## Patient advice sheet

Please remember that this patient advice sheet is intended as general information only. We aim to make the information as up to date and accurate as possible, but please note that it is subject to change. Please therefore always check specific advice on any concerns you may have with your doctor.

### How can you help reduce healthcare associated infections?

Infection prevention & control is important to the well-being of our patients and for that reason we have infection prevention & control procedures in place. Keeping your hands clean is an effective way of preventing the spread of infections. Please follow our infection prevention and control guidelines when visiting our healthcare sites. Further information is available on our website.

### Patient Advice Sheet

If you would like a copy of this information on audiotape, in large print or translated, please call the Patient Advice Liaison Service on 01296 831120 or email [bht.pals@nhs.net](mailto:bht.pals@nhs.net)

এই তথ্যে লেখা সহজ পড়া যায় অথবা বৃহৎ চিত্রের মত বিক; ফরম্যাটে পাওয়া যাবে, এবং অনুরোধে অন্যান্য ভাষায়ও পাওয়া যেতে পারে। আমরা তথ্যের জন্য আপনার ডিজিটাল হোমের সাথে কথা বলুন।

Na żądanie te informacje mogą zostać udostępnione w innych formatach, takich jak zapis większą czcionką lub łatwą do czytania, a także w innych językach. Aby uzyskać więcej informacji, porozmawiaj ze swoim zespołem specjalistów.

Macluumaadkaan waxaa loo heli karaa qaab kale, sida ugu akhrinta ugu fudud, ama far waa weyn, waxana laga yabaa in lagu heli luuqaado Kale, haddii la codsado. Wixii macluumaad dheeraad ah, kala hadal kooxda xarunta caafimaadka.

Bu bilgi, kolay okunurluk veya buyuk baskilar gibi alternatif bicimlerde sunulabilir, ve talep uzerine Alternatif Dillerde sunulabilir. Daha fazla bilgi icin klinik ekibinizle irtibata gecin.

یہ معلوم ات متبادل فارمیشن میں ن دستیا کی جا سکتی ہیں، جیسا کہ پھڑن ے میں آسانی اور ہاٹن اور درخو است پر م تبادل ز بانوں م میں بھی دستیا ہو سکتی ہیں۔ مزید معلومات کے لیے، اپنی کیلنکل ٹیم سے بات کریں۔