

# CHOLESTYRAMINE

Other names: Questran-Lite®



**Important note:** The following information is intended to add to, not replace, the knowledge and judgment of your doctor, pharmacist or other health care professional.

## How does Cholestyramine work?

Cholestyramine binds to bile acids in the intestines (your gut) to form an insoluble complex which is excreted in the faeces (passed in your poo). The partial removal of bile acid results in decreased cholesterol levels and in liver disease reduces the bile acids deposited in the skin.

## Why you are taking this medicine

Cholestyramine can be used for the following conditions:

- to treat high cholesterol blood levels
- to treat or prevent skin itchiness
- to prevent diarrhoea following ileal resection or ileal disease

## How to take this medicine

Cholestyramine sachet (4g) is mixed with 100-150mL of water. Stir vigorously until the mixture is even. You can also mix cholestyramine with skim milk, thin soups, fruit juice or smoothies.

Take the correct number of sachets each day as instructed by your doctor.

Other medicine should be taken one hour before cholestyramine or 4-6 hours after to reduce interference with absorption.

## If you miss a dose

Take your dose as soon as possible except when it is close to the time for your next dose. If it is almost time for the next dose, skip the missed dose and return to your regular dosing schedule. You should not take two doses at the same time.

## Side Effects

Unfortunately as well as having good effects, most medicines have some effects on your body that are unwanted. These are called *side effects*.

Call your doctor **immediately** if you have any of these side effects:

- unusual bleeding e.g. black stools
- skin rash, severe itching or hives
- shortness of breath, wheezing
- muscle and joint pains
- severe stomach pain

Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you have these side effects:

- headache
- hiccups
- dizziness
- tiredness
- burnt urine odour
- gastrointestinal (stomach) upsets such as vomiting or diarrhoea
- heartburn, flatulence (wind)
- constipation is a common side effect. To help prevent constipation eat a well-balanced diet with lots of fruit and vegetables and drinks plenty of water.

The list of side effects is **not** complete. Tell your doctor or pharmacist if any of these side effects are of a concern to you.

### **Other Medicines**

Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you are taking any other medicine including herbal or complementary products and medicines you can buy without a prescription.

Beware that cholestyramine can affect the absorption of other medication if taken together.

### **Storage**

Keep all medicines out of reach of children.

**Read this leaflet and discuss any questions you have about your medicines with your doctor or pharmacist.**