

Dihydrocodeine: More harm than good?

Scientists have asked doctors to change the way they treat patients with long term pain.

They say there is "little or no evidence" that Dihydrocodeine helps in the long term and its side effects can be more distressing than the pain.

Is Dihydrocodeine still helping me?

Most people get used to Dihydrocodeine after a few weeks. Even if it helped when you started taking it, it might not be helping any more. It might be causing harmful unwanted side effects.

Should I stop taking it?

The only way to tell if Dihydrocodeine is still helping is to try taking a little less - and see if you notice a change in your pain. Use the guide inside to reduce your tablets safely.

What else can I do for my pain?

As well as trying to reduce Dihydrocodeine you can try other lifestyle changes such as being more active or practicing relaxation. Our Wellbeing Practitioners can support you as you try to make these changes.

Benefits of reducing Dihydrocodeine

As you reduce your dose you may notice a reduction in its side effects.



Better control of pain



More able to fight infection



Thinking more clearly



Managing your emotions



Feeling less tired



Maintaining a healthy weight



Easier to go to the toilet



Less difficulty having sex

What do I do now?

If you want to try to reduce your tablets you don't need to see a GP. You can follow the guide inside this leaflet. If you would also like to talk to a Wellbeing Practitioner you can call Dawn on **07971 589 817**, Aileen on **07795 343 985** or email

loth.wellbeingmidlothhscp@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk

My 6 month plan



Go Slow.

- Take one less tablet every month.
- Do not stop in one go.



Stop if your pain gets too bad.

- If your pain is too bad go back to the level above.
- You can always try again at another time.



You may feel poorly.

- You may feel flu like symptoms for a few days each time you reduce your tablets.
- Do not increase your dose - you should feel better after a few days.





























Talk to someone.

- If you would like help with the process our Wellbeing Team are here to help.
- Call Dawn on 07971 589 817, Aileen on 07795 343 985 or email loth.wellbeingmidlothhscp@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk

Keep track of how you feel:

Keep a note of how your pain feels, any withdrawal symptoms and when you feel you are ready to reduce your tablets again. This might be better sleep, less pain or feeling confident.

AM	Lunch	PM	Night	Date	How I feel
				<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
				<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
				<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
				<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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	-			<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	-	-		<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	-	-	-	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

What to expect

You might notice some changes each time you reduce your tablets. You might have slightly more pain or feel flu like symptoms:



Diarrhoea



Chills



Vomiting



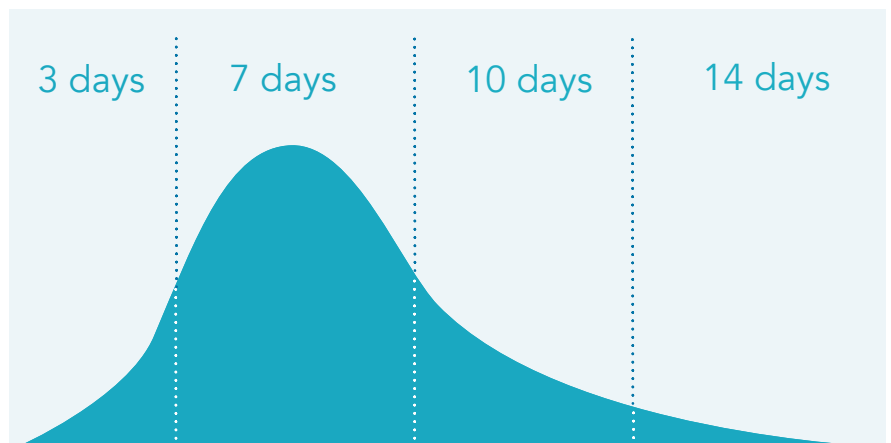
Anxious or Irritable



Sweating

Withdrawal symptoms each time you reduce a tablet are normal.

They will ease after 7-14 days.



For information on with withdrawal symptoms or living with long term pain go to www.livewellwithpain.co.uk