



Medications

The following tables contain some of the medications that you may be taking to manage some of the common problems associated with spinal cord injury (SCI).

Common medications used in bowel management

Drug	Action	Side Effects
Metamucil	It is a fibre substitute; increases bulk in the faeces	Not to be taken if faecal impaction or gut obstruction suspected
Normacol	Increases bulk in the faeces	Not to be taken if faecal impaction or gut obstruction suspected
Agarol	Lubricates the faeces and stimulates bowel movement	
Glycerol Suppositories	Lubricates the faeces	
Coloxyl	Softens the faeces	Not to be taken if you have stomach pain, nausea or vomiting. Can cause abdominal cramps
Duphalac or Lactulose	Softens the faeces	Can cause excessive flatulence (wind)
Senokot	Increases gut movement and stimulates reflex emptying of the bowel	Abdominal discomfort, diarrhoea
Coloxyl with Senna	Softens the faeces and stimulates the colon	Abdominal discomfort, diarrhoea
Nulax	Stimulates wave-like movement of the bowel	
Bisocodyl, Duro lax or Bisalax	Comes in different forms – micro enema or suppositories. Contact laxative that stimulates the colon resulting in increased wave action (peristaltic)	Abdominal cramps, rectal irritation, excess flatulence (wind)
Mircrolax Enema	Faecal softener; irritates the bowel wall and stimulates movement	Diarrhoea, rectal irritation

Common medications used for bladder management

Drug	Action	Side Effects
Oxybutynin (Ditropan)	Relaxes the bladder muscle	Nausea, constipation, dry mouth, drowsiness and blurred vision are common.
Phenoxy-benzamine (Dibenyline)	Relaxes bladder sphincter and bladder neck	Nasal congestion, dizziness, headaches, postural hypotension (fainting when you get up) blurred vision
Hiprex	Exerts anti-bacterial activity	Nausea, heartburn
Cranberry	Increases acidity of urine and reduces risk of infection	

Common medications used for pain and spasm

Drug	Action	Side Effects
Valium (Diazepam)	Relaxes muscle	Drowsiness
Tegretol (Carbamazepine)	Anti-epileptic medication. Used for neuropathic pain	Dizziness, blurred vision, drowsiness, nausea, vomiting, dry mouth
Tryptanol (Amitriptyline)	Used to control nerve root pain, relax muscle spasm, relax bladder	Drowsiness, hallucinations, dry mouth, blurred vision, bowel problems
Gabapentin	Used to control nerve root pain, relax muscle spasm, relax bladder	Drowsiness, fatigue, dizziness and sometimes constipation
Lioresal (Baclofen)	Relaxes skeletal muscle spasm	Daytime sedation, dizziness, nausea, vomiting, confusion, depression. May interact with alcohol.

Other medications

Drug	Action	Side Effects
Normison, Euhypnos (Temazepam)	Hastens onset of sleep and increases total sleeping time	Headache, dizziness, drowsiness, weakness, vomiting, confusion, memory loss. May interact with alcohol.
Pseudoephedrine	Raises blood pressure if administered an hour before you get out of bed, therefore reduces postural hypotension	Dry mouth and throat, drowsiness, fatigue, nausea, rapid heart rate and high blood pressure in some
Cisapride	Reduces reflux, enhances movement in the intestine	Abdominal cramps, diarrhoea, headaches, light-headedness, seizures, heart arrhythmias

Glyceryl trinitrate (GTN) is a medication normally prescribed to treat chest pain associated with a reduced oxygen supply to the heart muscle (angina). The medication works by causing widening of the major arteries thereby reducing the blood pressure. This drug is also used for treating the elevated blood pressure associated with the life threatening condition of Autonomic dysreflexia, experienced by people with a SCI at or above the T6.

GTN is available in the following forms:

- 1. Nitrolingual pumpspray:** this spray is directed under the tongue and can be repeated once after 5 minutes if the symptoms have not resolved.
- 2. Anginine tablets:** these are also given under the tongue (the tablet should be spat out when the blood pressure settles).
- 3. Transiderm-nitro patches:** these patches are applied to skin of either the chest or abdomen and should be removed as soon as blood pressure settles.

The main side-effect of GTN is a dramatic lowering of the blood pressure which can cause a head ache, flushing and/or fainting.

Warning:

For this reason GTN must not be used within 12 hours of Sildenafil (Viagra) or Vardenafil (Levitra) or 3 days within use of Tadalafil (Cialis). Combining these drugs causes a serious drop in blood pressure that may lead to the recipient experiencing a heart attack and/or death.

Important:

NO medication should be commenced or altered without consultation with your doctor.

Please speak to your doctor if you are experiencing any of the side effects listed



Further information

- Contact ParaQuad NSW
Freecall: 1 800 424 096 (outside metropolitan Sydney)
Clinical Services Intake/Information Officer **02 8741 5674**
- A member of the Spinal Outreach Service (SOS) **02 9334 0400**
- Contact your local doctor or specialist
- Speak to your local pharmacist