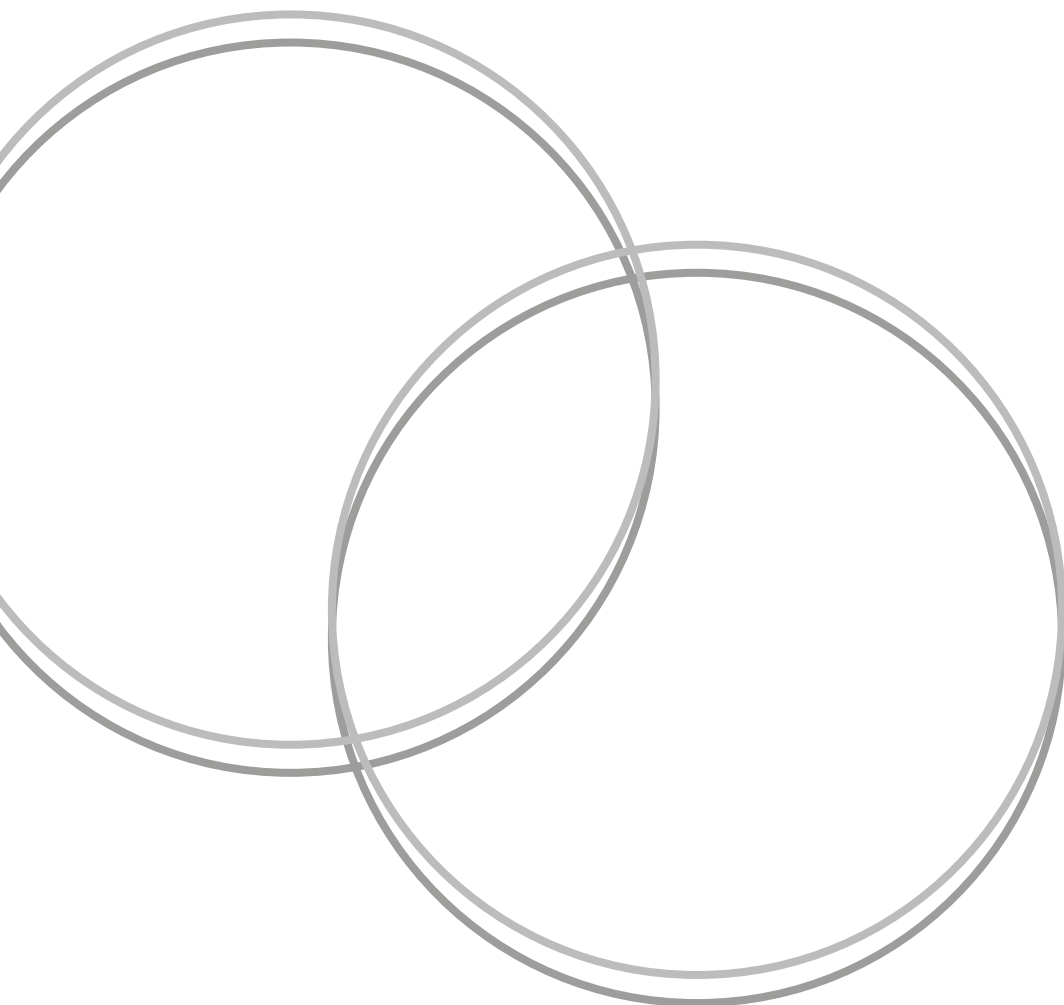




Oxford University Hospitals  
NHS Foundation Trust

# Loperamide (Imodium®)

**Information for patients**



## **What is loperamide (Imodium)?**

Loperamide (also known as Imodium) is one of a group of drugs called anti-diarrhoeals. These drugs are designed to thicken your stools, which will help to reduce or stop diarrhoea. It will also firm up a formed but slightly soft stool.

## **How does it work?**

Loperamide works by slowing the passage of waste through the lower bowel. This allows more water to be absorbed from the waste while it is in the lower bowel. In turn, this helps the waste (or stool) to become less watery.

## What dose should I take?

A suggested starting dose of loperamide will have been discussed with you. People vary a lot in their response to loperamide. The more loperamide you take, the firmer your stools will become. You may need a little bit of experimentation to find the dose that will control your bowel without causing you to become constipated.

It is usual to start on a low dose and build it up slowly over a few days, so that you can judge how your body is responding and can minimise the risk of becoming constipated. If you do start to become constipated, reduce the dose that you are taking. You should also make sure you are drinking enough water throughout the day, ideally 1.5 to 2 litres. Speak to your doctor about this if you are currently restricted with how much fluid you can have.

Loperamide is available as a capsule, tablet or as a syrup. In the Pelvic Floor Department, we recommend the syrup form. This is because it is much easier to make small changes to the dose, to help find exactly the right amount needed to best control your symptoms. This can only be obtained on prescription from your GP.

<b>Amount taken</b> 1 capsule	<b>Actual dose of loperamide</b> 2mg
<b>Amount taken</b> 1 tablet	<b>Actual dose of loperamide</b> 2mg
<b>Amount taken</b> 1 tsp (syrup)	<b>Actual dose of loperamide</b> 1mg
<b>Amount taken</b> ½ tsp (syrup)	<b>Actual dose of loperamide</b> 0.5mg

It is best to take loperamide regularly half an hour before a meal – this will help to slow down the usual gut activity that is stimulated by eating. Most people find that their bowel is more active in the morning, so taking the loperamide before breakfast will help most if you are the same.

The medicine starts to work within a half hour and is effective for 8-10 hrs. This means that taking a dose after lunch is not likely to help much if all your problems are in the morning, but a dose last thing at night may work better.

## **How long can I take loperamide for?**

Loperamide is a very safe drug and is not addictive. It can be taken in doses of up to 16mgs per day, over a long period of time or for as long as you are having problems. Do not take more than 16mgs per day without medical advice.

## **How to contact us**

If you have any questions or need advice please contact us, either by telephone or email.

Tel: **01865 235 881**

Email: **[pelvicfloor.advice@ouh.nhs.uk](mailto:pelvicfloor.advice@ouh.nhs.uk)**

## **Useful contacts**

### **Bladder and Bowel UK**

Tel: **01616078219**

Email: **[bbuk@disabledliving.co.uk](mailto:bbuk@disabledliving.co.uk)**

Website: **[www.bbuk.org.uk](http://www.bbuk.org.uk)**

### **The Pelvic Floor Society patient information leaflets**

Website: **[www.thepelvicfloorsociety.co.uk](http://www.thepelvicfloorsociety.co.uk)**





## Further information

If you would like an interpreter, please speak to the department where you are being seen.

Please also tell them if you would like this information in another format, such as:

- Easy Read
- large print
- braille
- audio
- electronic
- another language.

We have tried to make the information in this leaflet meet your needs. If it does not meet your individual needs or situation, please speak to your healthcare team. They are happy to help.

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