Te Whatu Ora
Health New Zealand
Waitaha Canterbury

# TRAMADOL

*tram-ah-dol*

## What does it do?

*Tramadol* is used to relieve pain.

## Before you start

- Tell your doctor if you have kidney or bowel problems, depression, have ever had a seizure, or have had a recent head injury.
- Tell your doctor if you are pregnant, planning to become pregnant, or breastfeeding.

## How should you take it?

Take *tramadol* as directed with a glass of water. You can take it with or without food.
Slow-release tablet: Swallow whole – do not crush or chew.
Liquid: Measure carefully with an oral syringe or measuring spoon.

## What if you forget a dose?

If *tramadol* is taken regularly and it is nearly time for your next dose, skip the missed dose and take your next dose at the usual time. Otherwise, take the missed dose as soon as you remember. Do not take two doses at the same time.

## Can you take other medicines?

Some medicines available without a prescription may react with *tramadol* including:

- sedating antihistamines (e.g. Phenergan®)
- cough suppressants (e.g. Duro-Tuss®, Benadryl Dry Forte®)
- some migraine medicines, such as sumatriptan (e.g. Sumagran Active®)

Tell your pharmacist or doctor about all medicines or treatments that you may be taking, including vitamins, herbal products (e.g. St John's wort) or recreational drugs.

## What side effects might you notice?

| Side Effects | Recommended action |
|---|---|
| Muscle twitching or shaking you can't control, confusion, heavy sweating, fever<br>Slow or shallow breathing, hard to wake up<br>Seizures | Tell your doctor immediately |
| Hallucinations, mood changes | Tell your doctor |
| Constipation | Take your prescribed laxatives. Tell your doctor |
| Trouble sleeping, drowsiness, dizziness<br>Nausea, vomiting, dry mouth or throat<br>Itching, flushing | Tell your doctor if troublesome |

If you notice any other effects, discuss them with your doctor or pharmacist.

## Other information:

- *Tramadol* can be taken regularly or when required. If *tramadol* is not relieving your pain contact your health professional.
- *Tramadol* can impair your ability to do tasks such as driving or using machines. Alcohol makes this worse. Discuss your risk with your health professional. (search NZTA - Are you safe to drive?)
- *Tramadol* may be addictive with long-term use.
- If you have been taking *tramadol* regularly for a long time, talk to your doctor before stopping.