Te Whatu Ora
Health New Zealand
Waitaha Canterbury

# ESOMEPRAZOLE

*ess-oh-mep-ra-zole*

## What does it do?

*Esomeprazole* is used to treat and prevent some stomach and gut problems, such as indigestion, reflux, and ulcers. It reduces the amount of acid made in your stomach.

## Before you start

- Tell your health professional if you are pregnant, planning to become pregnant, or breastfeeding.

## How should you take it?

Take *esomeprazole* regularly as directed with a glass of water. You can take it with or without food, but it may work better if you take it before food.
If you have trouble swallowing you can mix the tablet in a glass of water. Swallow without chewing. Do not crush the tablet.

## What if you forget a dose?

If 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 *esomeprazole* including:

- iron supplements (e.g. Ferro-Tab®)

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 cramps, tiredness or weakness, tingling or numbness (may be signs of low magnesium) | Tell your doctor |

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

## Other information:

- Rarely, *esomeprazole* can cause kidney problems. Often there are no symptoms, but you may feel unusually tired or weak, or have a fever or nausea. Discuss this with your health professional.
- If your symptoms are well managed, talk to your doctor about whether you need to keep taking *esomeprazole* – they may recommend that you stop it. When you stop you may get symptoms like reflux and heartburn but these should only last for a few weeks. Talk to your health professional if these are troublesome, or if they do not get better.
- Long-term use of *esomeprazole* may cause bone problems, gut infections, and low vitamin B12. Tell your doctor if you have weak bones (osteoporosis), if you experience severe diarrhoea or stomach cramps or have concerns about vitamin B12. Talk to your doctor about how long you should take *esomeprazole* for.