

REMINYL™ (also known as galantamine hydrobromide)

The purpose of this medicine:

Reminyl is one of a group of drugs called “cholinesterase inhibitors” which is used to treat symptoms in individuals with mild to moderate Alzheimer Disease.

In the brains of people with Alzheimer Disease there is a progressive degeneration of nerve cells. Particularly notable is a degeneration of cells that make acetylcholine, a chemical thought to be important for learning and memory. People with Alzheimer Disease have lower brain levels of acetylcholine. Reminyl works by increasing the amount of acetylcholine in the brain. It is believed that because Reminyl reduces the break down of acetylcholine, it will lead to an increase in the level of acetylcholine in the brain.

It has also been suggested, based on data from lab experiments, that Reminyl enhances the action of acetylcholine by affecting the nicotinic receptors in the brain. The clinical relevance to humans of this finding is unknown.

Reminyl’s potential beneficial effect may lessen as the disease process advances and fewer cells are available to make acetylcholine.

How does it help?

Reminyl is intended to treat symptoms in individuals with mild to moderate Alzheimer Disease. In clinical trials, some individuals who took Reminyl, compared to individuals who took a placebo (a substance which looks like the drug but has no effect), showed some improvement or no decline in cognition (including memory, orientation and language) and global functioning (for example, the performance of daily activities such as bathing, dressing, and eating).

What does Reminyl not do?

Reminyl is not a cure for Alzheimer Disease as it does not affect the underlying degenerative process of the disease.

Who should take Reminyl?

Individuals who have been diagnosed with mild to moderate Alzheimer Disease.

How do you obtain Reminyl?

Reminyl can only be obtained with a prescription from a doctor after a diagnosis of Alzheimer Disease has been made.

A reminder:

This medicine has been prescribed only for you or for the person you are caring for. It must not be given to anybody else or used for any other illness.

Important! Things to know before taking Reminyl

You should tell the doctor if you or the person you are caring for had an allergic reaction to Reminyl or to any of the inactive ingredients in the product or an allergic reaction to a similar type of medication. The inactive ingredients include the following: lactose monohydrate, microcrystalline cellulose, colloidal anhydrous silica, crospovidone, magnesium stearate, hydroxypropyl methylcellulose, propylene glycol, talc, and titanium dioxide.

You should also tell your doctor if you or the person you are caring for are taking any other medications.

You should tell the doctor if you have any of the following conditions:

- Heart disorders
- Liver problems
- Kidney problems
- Fainting spells
- Stomach ulcer or a history of ulcer
- Acute abdominal pain
- Disorders of the nervous system (like epilepsy)
- Respiratory diseases that interfere with breathing (like asthma)
- A recent operation on the stomach or bladder or difficulties in passing urine
- An increased risk of developing ulcer, for example, currently using non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) or high doses of acetylsalicylic acid (ASA/ Aspirin)
- History of Seizures
- Low body weight and over 85 years of age
- A woman of childbearing age or nursing mother

If any of these situations apply, your doctor will determine whether you can take Reminyl, how closely you will need to be monitored and/or whether the dose may need to be changed.

Anaesthetic: If an operation with a general anaesthetic is needed, inform the doctor about the use of Reminyl.

How do you take Reminyl?

- Take Reminyl only as prescribed by your doctor. Never change the dose yourself
- Reminyl comes in three doses: 4mg (off white tablet); 8 mg (pink tablet) and 12 mg (orange- brown tablet)
- Your doctor will tell you what dosage of Reminyl to take, starting with the low dose and gradually increasing (to the best- tolerated dose), depending upon how you respond to the treatment. The highest dose that should be taken is 12 mg twice a day.
- Reminyl should be taken twice a day, preferably with the morning and evening meals. Swallow the tablets whole with a glass of water.
- To benefit from your medicine you must take it every day.
- If you miss taking a dose of Reminyl, do not worry. Wait and take the next dose at the usual time. DO NOT take two doses at once.
- If you miss taking Reminyl for several days, DO NOT restart treatment without contacting your doctor.
- If you have problems remembering to take medications it may be necessary to have someone manage this for you.
- Reminyl should not be taken with other cholinesterase inhibitors.

What are the possible side effects?

Along with its beneficial effect, Reminyl may cause some undesirable reactions. In clinical studies, common side effects included nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, and weight loss. Caregivers should be encouraged to monitor for these adverse events and inform the doctor if they occur. Other common reactions include: abdominal pain, indigestion, decreased appetite, headache, dizziness, tiredness, sleeplessness, and depression. As well, a runny nose, a urinary tract infection, and falling, sometimes resulting in injury, may also be experienced. Side effects are most likely to occur after an increase in dose and may go away with continued treatment. If they persist, however, you should tell your doctor. Some patients experienced trembling, slow heartbeat and/or fainting. Should such symptoms occur, contact your doctor immediately, as medical assistance might be necessary.

If you feel unwell or have any symptoms that you do not understand, or find distressing, you should contact your doctor immediately.

What to do if an overdose is taken:

If more medication has been taken than what is prescribed, immediately contact either your doctor, hospital emergency department, or the nearest poison control center immediately.

How do you store Reminyl?

- Store Reminyl tablets at room temperature (between 15°C –30°C).

- Store Reminyl in its original package.
- Keep Reminyl in a safe place out of reach of children.
- Do not use Reminyl after the expiry date shown on the package.
- If your doctor decides to stop Reminyl treatment, return any leftover medicine to your pharmacist. Keep it only if your doctor tells you to do so.

How much does it cost and who pays for this medicine?

Reminyl costs approximately \$5.00/day for two doses. At present, Reminyl is covered under the provincial drug plan in Quebec, Saskatchewan, and Alberta. In other provinces, discussions are ongoing to have Reminyl included on the different provincial drug plans.

Who produces Reminyl?

Janssen Ortho Inc., 19 Greenbelt Drive, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

For further information:

This information sheet is a brief description and summary of information about this medicine. If you have any further questions about Reminyl, ask your doctor or pharmacist.

This sheet is for your information only and does not represent an endorsement of Reminyl™ by the Alzheimer Society of Canada.

Please call the Alzheimer Society of Peel for further information

Port Credit – 905-278-3667 Meadowvale – 905-542-7415 Brampton – 905-792-1319

*Source: Drugs: Reminyl™
Fact sheet – Alzheimer Society of Canada*