EQUASYM® XL

Methylphenidate Hydrochloride
Modified Release Capsules 10•20•30 mg

Equasym XL and your child

Information for parents and carers of children and adolescents who have been prescribed Equasym XL

Reporting of side effects

If your child gets any side effects, talk to their doctor, pharmacist or nurse. This includes any possible side effects not listed in the package leaflet. You can also report side effects directly via the Yellow Card Scheme at: www.mhra.gov.uk/yellowcard or search for MHRA Yellow Card in the Google Play or Apple App Store.

By reporting side effects you can help provide more information on the safety of this medicine.

Takeda

Introduction

Your child has been has prescribed Equasym XL (methylphenidate hydrochloride).

This booklet tells you:

- What Equasym XL is
- How to take it
- What to expect when taking it
- How it could help control the symptoms of attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)

This leaflet does not replace the Patient Information Leaflet (PIL) provided with your child's medicine. Please always read the PIL carefully before use.

What is Equasym XL?

Equasym XL is used to treat ADHD. It is only used after trying treatments which do not involve medicines, such as counselling and behavioural therapy. Equasym is a stimulant medicine used to treat the symptoms of ADHD in children and young people between the ages of 6 to 18.

Equasym XL contains a medicine called methylphenidate hydrochloride, which helps improve the activity of certain parts of the brain, which are under-active in ADHD.

Why has your child been prescribed Equasym XL?

ADHD is a neurological (or brain) condition that affects a person's ability to focus, pay attention and manage certain behaviours (such as feeling impulsive and/or hyperactive).

Your child's doctor has prescribed Equasym XL to help reduce the symptoms of ADHD to:

- improve attention -
increasing their ability to focus on tasks

- improve concentration -
helping them not be distracted by other things

- reduce impulsiveness -
giving them a chance to stop and think before they act

What is ADHD?

Brain regions are connected by messengers called neurotransmitters, that help different parts of the brain communicate with one another. These messengers play a role in our thoughts, emotions and actions.

In people with ADHD, it is thought that the messengers have different activity levels, meaning the message that gets through might be different. This may be the reason why individuals with ADHD can experience ongoing problems in everyday life, such as difficulty with inattention, motivation and controlling their behaviour.

Stimulant medications like Equasym XL can help to control the activity of certain parts of the brain and so help to improve attention and concentration and lessen impulsivity.

What could taking Equasym XL mean for your child?

Equasym XL is a long-acting medicine. It works by gradually releasing the active ingredient, which means it can help your child carry out everyday tasks from morning, throughout the day, and into the evening.

For more information on how ADHD medication works in the brain and what this could mean for your child and their ADHD journey, Takeda have developed patient videos that you can watch.

Click the QR codes for the patient videos if viewing digitally or scan the QR code if viewing a physical document:

Young people taking ADHD medication

Parents/carers of children taking ADHD medication

How should it be taken?

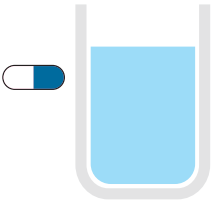
Equasym XL comes in three different strengths. If your child is already taking traditional (immediate release) methylphenidate, their doctor may prescribe an equivalent dose of Equasym XL instead.

If your child has not taken methylphenidate before, their doctor will normally start treatment with traditional (immediate release) methylphenidate tablets. If their doctor feels it is necessary, methylphenidate treatment may be started with Equasym XL instead, 10 mg once daily before breakfast. They may increase their dose later on. The maximum daily dose is 60 mg.

Equasym XL should be taken exactly as prescribed by your child's doctor. Always double-check anything you are unsure about with your child's doctor, pharmacist or nurse. This treatment should not be given to anyone without a prescription.

Equasym XL should be given in the morning before breakfast.

There are two ways to take Equasym XL capsules:



Option 1
Swallowed whole with water

Option 2
Opened and the entire contents sprinkled onto a tablespoon of applesauce, and eaten immediately, followed by a drink

How long do the effects last?

Equasym XL is a 'modified release' form of methylphenidate, which releases the medicine gradually over a time period corresponding to the school day (8 hours). It is intended to take the place of the same total daily dose of traditional (immediate release) methylphenidate taken at breakfast and lunchtime.

What if my child misses a dose?

Do not give your child a double dose to make up for a forgotten dose. If they forget a dose, wait until it is time for the next dose and get them to take it as normal.

What if it doesn't work?

Ensure your child keeps taking Equasym XL as prescribed by their doctor. If your child doesn't feel any better or feels worse after 1 month of treatment, speak to their doctor. They may need a different treatment. Talk to your doctor before stopping Equasym XL.

What if my child takes too much?

If your child takes too much Equasym XL, talk to their doctor or call an ambulance straight away. Tell them how much they have taken.

Will this affect my child's growth?

Long-term treatment (>1 year) may slow growth in some children. Their doctor will keep an eye on this and may pause treatment if needed.

Their doctor should check: height and weight, appetite, blood pressure, heart rate, mood and behaviour. These checks are usually done regularly during treatment.

Are there any side effects?

Like all medicines, Equasym XL can cause side effects, although not everybody gets them. Your child's doctor will talk to you about these side effects.

Some side effects could be serious. The full list of side effects can be found in the Patient Information Leaflet supplied with Equasym XL.

Serious side effects that affect less than 1 in 10 people include uneven heartbeat (palpitations) and mood swings.

If your child gets any of these side effects, see their doctor straight away.

The most common non-serious side effects (may affect more than 1 in 10 people) are headache, feeling nervous, and not being able to sleep.

Will my child have to take it forever?

Equasym XL does not need to be taken forever. If your child takes Equasym XL for more than a year, their doctor should stop treatment for a short time, this may happen during a school holiday. This will show if the medicine is still needed.

However, do not stop your child's treatment without first talking to their doctor.

What else should my child know when taking Equasym XL?

You and your child or adolescent may have more questions about Equasym XL not covered in this prescribed patient leaflet. For more information on the following please refer to the Patient Information Leaflet supplied with Equasym XL:

- Having an operation
- Drug testing
- Methylphenidate with alcohol
- Pregnancy, breast-feeding and fertility
- Prolonged erections
- Driving and using machines

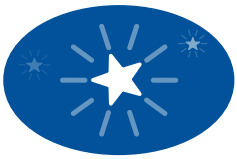
Tips for managing some of the side effects

If your child has lost their appetite, the following suggestions might be helpful:

- Start the day with a filling breakfast
- Eat smaller meals more often throughout the day
- Try moving their evening meal to a later time when the effects of the medicine have worn off so that they are more likely to have an appetite
- Try not to eat too many sugary snacks
- Consider speaking to their doctor for dietary advice

If your child is having trouble sleeping at night, the following suggestions might be helpful:

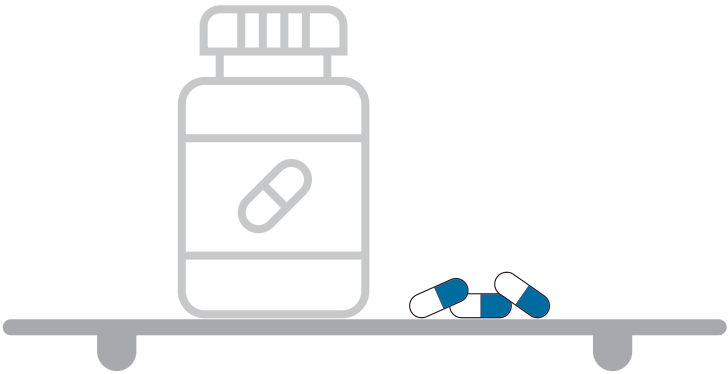
- Take Equasym XL first thing in the morning before breakfast
- Avoid food and drinks containing caffeine (e.g. chocolate, cola, coffee or tea) at least 6 hours before bedtime
- Avoid alcohol
- Take plenty of exercise during the day so that they are more tired at bedtime and leave at least 2 hours between exercise and going to bed
- Make the bedroom quiet and dark so there is little to disturb them
- In bed, try not to watch TV or use a phone, tablet or computer, as these will stimulate their brain
- Try taking a bath before bedtime to help relax and use soothing oils like lavender oil on their pillowcase
- Make sure the temperature of the bedroom is not too warm (16–18°C is thought to be ideal)
- Try to have a regular routine by going to bed at around the same time each night and getting up at around the same time each morning



How to store Equasym XL

Equasym XL should only be taken by your child as their doctor has prescribed. It's important that you store your child's medication correctly and take the following precautions:

- Keep Equasym XL out of sight and reach of children
- Make sure Equasym XL is stored in a safe place so no one else takes it
- Do not let your child take Equasym XL after the expiry date. The expiry date is stated on the blister and the carton after 'EXP' and refers to the last day of that month
- Store Equasym XL below 25°C
- Do not let your child take Equasym XL if the capsules look damaged in any way
- Do not dispose of Equasym XL via wastewater or household waste. Ask your child's pharmacist how to throw away medicines your child no longer uses.



Notes:

Further information

If you have any questions or queries about this medicine, speak to your child's doctor, pharmacist or nurse.

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