



**A guide to...**

# ***Gentamicin injections for adult patients***

## ***Patient information***

**Pharmacy Department**  
Watford General Hospital  
Hemel Hempstead Hospital  
St Albans City Hospital

### **What is Gentamicin and what is it used for?**

Gentamicin injection is an antibiotic medicine used to treat a wide variety of infections such as chest, wound and blood infections.

### **Tests required during Gentamicin injection courses**

Gentamicin antibiotic levels have to be measured at specific times depending on whether you are taking this twice a day or once a day. This will monitor the amount of gentamicin in the blood ensuring an optimum dose is prescribed and to help to reduce the risk of side-effects.

When we have the results, the dose of gentamicin antibiotics may have to be increased or decreased or interval between doses so that you gain the maximum benefit from the gentamicin injection course with minimal side effects.

### **What are the possible side effects of gentamicin injection?**

If you experience any of the following serious side effects please report to the attending doctor or nurse.

- An allergic reaction, shortness of breath, closing of the throat, hives, swelling of the lips, face and tongue, rash or fainting
- Little or no urine
- Decreased hearing or ringing in the ears particularly with multiple courses due to the potential accumulation of gentamicin
- Dizziness, clumsiness or unsteadiness
- Numbness, skin tingling, muscle twitching or seizures
- Severe watery diarrhoea

Please report to your doctor or nurse if you experience any of the following as well:

- Increased thirst
- Loss of appetite
- Nausea or vomiting
- A rash
- Family history of hearing loss or a mitochondrial mutation as there may be an increased risk of the hearing being affected known as ototoxicity.

Side effects other than the listed above may also occur. Please report to your doctor or nurse.

## Further information

If you require further information whilst you are still an inpatient, please speak to the ward pharmacist or one of your nursing or medical team.

If you have queries on discharge, or would like more explanation, please call the hospital pharmacy department patient helpline:

**Tel: 01923 436 237 (Monday to Friday 2.00pm—4.00pm)**

Alternatively please contact your community pharmacist, GP or nursing team.

If you need this leaflet in another language, large print, Braille or audio version, please call **01923 217 187** or email **westherts.pals@nhs.uk**



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