

This does not replace to any information you have already been given by your medical team

We will teach you or a family member how to apply your fentanyl patches.

Why do I need to use a fentanyl transdermal patch?

Fentanyl medication is used to relieve chronic or long lasting pain requiring strong pain killers. The fentanyl drug is contained inside a sticky patch. When this is applied to your body gradually passes through your skin into your bloodstream. Once in your bloodstream, fentanyl acts within your body to relieve pain.

What is a fentanyl transdermal patch?

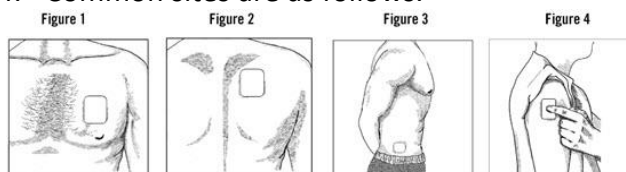
Fentanyl transdermal patch is a form of pain relief delivered via the skin over a 3 day period (or as directed by your GP).

There is no fixed or maximum dose of fentanyl. You may need to wear more than one patch to make up the correct dose for you.

It takes at least 12 hours for the level of fentanyl to reach its maximum after the first patch has been started or after the dose has been changed. It will also take over 12 hours for the effects of a patch to wear off after it is removed.

How to apply your fentanyl patch:

1. Remove the old patch(es) first
2. Write the date of application on the outside of the new patch(es)
3. Peel the plastic backing off and apply the new patch(es) to dry, clean, non-irritated, flat not too hairy skin.
4. Common sites are as follows.



5. It is important to make sure that all the edges of the patch are in contact with your skin. If your patch is difficult to stick to your skin, apply tape to the edges of the patch.
6. **Wash your hands** thoroughly after applying or removing a fentanyl patch.

How do I dispose of my fentanyl patch?

Some fentanyl may still be on the patch so keep the patch away from children. Fold the adhesive sides of the patch together and wrap the patch before carefully putting it into the rubbish bin.

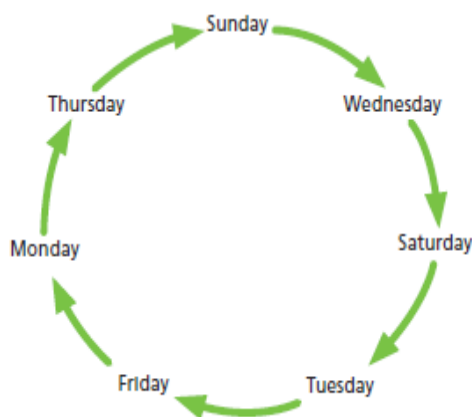
How often do I change my fentanyl patch?

Wear the patch continuously for 72 hours (or as directed by your GP). It is important to change the application site to avoid your skin becoming irritated.

When you stick on your fentanyl patch make a note of the date and time you will need to replace it and remove the old one.

You could

- write this on your calendar or
- set an alarm on your mobile phone or
- For 72 hour patch use. Follow the diagram below. Mark the day you change the patch on the diagram below then follow the arrow in a clockwise direction for 3 days and mark the day and time the patch needs changing



[continued]

Some things to remember:

Heat speeds up the release of fentanyl from the patch. This may give you too high a dose which may cause you to become unwell, therefore:-
DO NOT apply immediately after a bath/shower – allow the skin to cool first.

DO NOT apply direct heat e.g. hot water bottle, heat pad to the area with the patch on.

DO NOT soak in a hot bath, use a sauna or sunbathe while using fentanyl patches.

DO seek help if you develop a fever and try to keep your temperature down.

You can shower, bathe and swim with your patches as they are waterproof. Please cover when swimming to prevent detachment.

What if the patch falls off or I forget to change it?

Stick a new patch on as soon as you can.

What are the common side effects?

Constipation: this is common, but usually not as bad with fentanyl as some other pain relievers. Eating fibre foods (fruit, vegetables) and drinking plenty of fluid helps. You usually will also need to take daily medication (laxative) to keep your bowels moving.

Diarrhoea: a very few people, after changing to fentanyl from a more constipating pain reliever, experience increased bowel activity (diarrhoea and/or wind) for a few days.

Nausea (feeling sick) or vomiting: if this happens, it usually only lasts for a few days after starting or increasing the dose and usually settles quickly. Anti-sickness medication can help if needed.

Sleepiness: fentanyl can make you feel a little sleepy especially when you first start to take it. This usually improves after a few days. Seek medical advice if you are feeling too drowsy, muddled, or are unsteady on your feet as your medication will need to be reviewed.

Weakness

Headache

Some uncommon side effects of fentanyl include dry mouth, sweating, blurred vision, itching, vivid dreams and problems passing urine. (This is not a complete list).

Remove your patch and call your health professional if you have

- Difficulty in breathing
- Pale skin tone, cool to touch and sweaty skin (clammy)
- Severe sleepiness
- Dizziness & confusion
- Inability to think, talk or walk normally

If you have any questions or concerns please contact your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist

Keeping yourself safe when using fentanyl

Some medicines can affect how fentanyl works.

It is important to tell any health professional that you are using a fentanyl patch and the dose.

Tell your medical team and pharmacist all the medicines you are currently taking (or are thinking of using). This includes medicines you may have bought yourself, been given by others and any complementary therapies. Your pharmacist or doctor will tell you if the medicine is safe to use with your fentanyl patch.

Important information:

Name of my Doctor

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Phone number

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Name of my Nurse

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Phone number

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My fentanyl patch dose:

