Information on FLUPENTIXOL for Service Users and their Families

This leaflet provides general information about your medication. Manufacturer patient information leaflets are also provided with all medicines. If you require further information, speak to your doctor, pharmacist or nurse.

Flupentixol is also known as Depixol® or Fluanxol®. It comes as:

- tablets
- a depot injection called Depixol® or Psytixol

Flupentixol is pronounced:

Flu - pen - tick - sol

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reviewed by:</th>
<th>On:</th>
<th>Next Review:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DTC</td>
<td>January 2017</td>
<td>January 2019</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Mersey Care Medicines Information Service¹ regularly updates this information sheet.

¹ Medicines Information, Pharmacy, Mossley Hill Hospital, Park Avenue, Liverpool L18 8BU
**What is Flupentixol for?**
Flupentixol is part of a group of medications called antipsychotics which are used to treat symptoms such as hearing voices, seeing, feeling or sensing things that are not there, unpleasant thoughts, feeling paranoid, feeling that other people can read your thoughts, being withdrawn or lacking in motivation. Flupentixol is also used to treat depression and severe tension and anxiety.

**How should I take Flupentixol?**
Before taking any flupentixol, tell your doctor if:
- you are allergic to flupentixol and any of its other ingredients
- you suffer from any other conditions especially heart, chest, kidney or liver disease, glaucoma, epilepsy, diabetes or thyroid problems, Parkinson's disease, stroke and blood clots
- you are taking any other medicines including any you may have bought without prescription, supplements and herbal remedies.
- you are pregnant (or planning pregnancy) or breast-feeding

Your doctor will decide how much flupentixol is right for you to take. If you are taking tablets, swallow them whole with a drink of water. Never take more than the prescribed amount. If you are prescribed an injection, your nurse will give you the correct dose. Ask your pharmacist or nurse if you are not sure of anything.

**Do I need any tests when taking Flupenthixol?**
Your doctor may carry out some blood tests and monitor your height, weight, blood pressure and pulse. You may also get a heart tracing or electrocardiogram (ECG) done to check how well your heart is working. These tests will allow the doctor to check if this medication is right for you and to monitor your treatment.

**Can I stop taking Flupentixol if I feel better?**
Flupentixol helps prevent your symptoms from returning (relapse) so it is best to continue taking it. People who take this type of medication regularly are less likely to deteriorate or have to go into hospital with severe symptoms.

It is better to discuss with your doctor how long you will need to be on medication. Antipsychotic medication tends to be taken long term. If you want to stop your medication it is better to do it in discussion with your doctor, and slowly so that you can be monitored for any unpleasant withdrawal effects.
What if I forget a dose of Flupentixol?
If you forget the tablets, take the missed dose as soon as possible. However, if it is almost time for the next dose, skip the missed dose and take the next dose at the usual time then continue your course as before. Do not double the dose or take extra doses to make up. If you miss an injection, contact your nurse or doctor as soon as you remember.

When will Flupentixol start to work?
You may start to feel better in a short time but it can take several weeks or months before you notice the benefits of this medicine.

Are there any side effects?
Flupentixol may cause side effects in some people, but they may vary from person to person. Many side effects wear off over time. Known side effects are:

- drowsiness; dizziness
- stomach upsets
- headaches
- dry mouth
- sweating and rashes
- appetite/weight changes
- sexual problems, irregular periods or breast changes
- Injections can cause swelling and redness

Occasionally, more serious side effects can occur. These include:

- Rash, itching, swelling
- breathing difficulty
- fever, sore throat, bruising
- irregular heartbeats
- stroke in older people with dementia
- distressing thoughts of harming or killing yourself
- unusual movements of your face, mouth, tongue or body
- muscle stiffness, tremor, restlessness; unusual movements
- high fever, stiffness, sweating, unconsciousness – ‘NMS’

If you are concerned about side effects, talk to your doctor, pharmacist or nurse. If you think a medicine has caused you an unwanted side effect, please report the problem either on a Yellow Card form available from your doctor, nurse or pharmacist OR online at this website [http://yellowcard.mhra.gov.uk/].
Can I take other medicines?
Other medicines may interact with flupentixol causing unwanted effects. These may include medicines bought over the counter without prescription. Always ask your doctor or pharmacist before taking any other medicines.

Can I drive?
Flupentixol can make you feel sleepy, dizzy and less alert. If you are affected in this way, do not drive or work with machinery. You may commit an offence if you drive when your condition or treatment affect your ability to drive safely. Talk to your doctor or pharmacist or contact DVLA if you are not sure.

Can I drink alcohol?
Avoid drinking alcohol while taking this medication. The combined effects of alcohol and flupentixol can make you more sleepy and may worsen your symptoms.

Can I get pregnant or breast feed?
Medicines can have harmful effects at any time during pregnancy. If you are pregnant, or are planning to get pregnant, you should seek advice from your doctor. Newborns whose mothers were treated with antipsychotics during pregnancy can show unusual movements and withdrawal side effects. You and your doctor or specialist will decide if the potential benefits of treatment outweigh the potential risks to the baby.
Flupentixol may pass into breast milk. If you are breast feeding, you should get your doctor’s advice.

What alternative treatments are there?
Flupentixol is an antipsychoctic medication. Alternative medications include zuclopenthixol, chlorpromazine, haloperidol and fluphenazine. Other alternatives are the ‘atypical antipsychotics’ like amisulpride, aripiprazole, clozapine, olanzapine, quetiapine and risperidone. Your doctor or pharmacist will be able to provide you with further information about these medications.

IMPORTANT
Remember to keep medicines where children cannot see or reach them. Never share medicines with others even if their symptoms appear the same as yours.

NEVER EXCEED THE STATED DOSE OF YOUR MEDICINE