

# Information Sheet for patients using Propranolol for Migraine Attacks

## **Background**

Propranolol is a member of a group of drugs known as Beta-Blockers. These are widely used in a number of areas but particularly in cardiovascular medicine. They are also very effective in the prevention of migraine.

## **Side effects**

No tablets are without side effects in a small number of people. The main problems associated with Beta-Blockers are fatigue and coldness of the hands and feet. They should not be used if you have asthma or bronchitis as they can make this condition worse. Please check with your doctor if you have any other problems that may prevent you from taking beta-blockers.

## **Taking the tablets**

Slow release tablets are preferable (Propranolol MR). Start at 80 mg and then increase to 160 mg and 240 mg in 2-week intervals if there are no side-effects.

## **For how long should I take them?**

You need to take the medication at the maximum dose you can tolerate for at least 8 weeks before a benefit can be judged. If there is a benefit then they should be taken for at least 6 months after which time you may like to discuss with your doctor whether you can withdraw them.

Although this medication is widely used by headache specialists and there is a large amount of experience with it, it should be noted that it is not licensed for use in headache.

This leaflet is intended to provide a brief overview of aspects of this treatment protocol. It is not intended as a substitute for the comprehensive 'product information' leaflet found inside all boxes of medication. The 'product information' leaflet should always be read before taking medication.

**Your prescribing doctor will discuss the risks and benefits of the medication as it relates to you and answer any further questions you may have.**