

## **Switching from quetiapine MR or XL tablets to quetiapine plain tablets**

### **Why are you asking me to switch?**

In March 2012 quetiapine plain tablets started to become much cheaper. This is not the case with your quetiapine XL tablets. The NHS is trying very hard not to waste money and switching preparations can be a safe way to do this.

### **How much does quetiapine cost?**

Currently the XL tablets can cost over £2,000 per year depending on the dose used whereas the cost of the plain tablets is around £600 per year.

### **What is the difference between the plain and XL tablets?**

Both types of tablet have the same active ingredient (quetiapine). This means switching is unlikely to affect how well the tablet works. However, should you feel the new tablets are not working as well, please discuss it with your doctor.

### **Will I have to change how I take my tablets?**

Possibly. Plain tablets are usually taken twice daily, which means a change. However, plain tablets can be taken once daily, like the XL tablet, if you or your doctor thinks it will help you. Some people prefer to just take their quetiapine once a day to help them remember to take it.

### **Will any of the side-effects I might experience change?**

One of the side-effects some people experience taking quetiapine is feeling sleepy during the day. Plain quetiapine tablets, if taken once a day may make you feel a little sleepier than your XL tablet did. However this is not necessarily a problem if the quetiapine is taken in the evening so you are in bed when it starts to take effect. If you are concerned about any new side-effects that last more than a few days, please contact your doctor to discuss them.

### **What if I am unhappy with changing?**

Please discuss your reasons with your doctor and if after further discussion you are still unhappy about swapping, then he or she will allow you to remain on the XL preparation. This will not affect how you are treated either now or in the future.

Simon Whitfield Chief Pharmacist

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