

PRESENTATION

Metered dose spray containing 400 micrograms glyceryl trinitrate per dose.

Tablets containing glyceryl trinitrate 2, 3 or 5 milligrams for buccal administration (depends on local ordering).

INDICATIONS

Cardiac chest pain due to angina or myocardial infarction.

Acute cardiogenic pulmonary oedema.

ACTIONS

A potent vasodilator drug resulting in:

- dilatation of coronary arteries/relief of coronary spasm.
- dilatation of systemic veins resulting in lower pre-load.
- reduced blood pressure.

CONTRA-INDICATIONS

Hypotension (actual or estimated systolic blood pressure <90mmHg).

Hypovolaemia.

Head trauma.

Cerebral haemorrhage.

Sildenafil (Viagra) and other related drugs – glyceryl trinitrate must not be given to patients who have taken sildenafil or related drugs within the previous 24 hours. Profound hypotension may occur.

Unconscious patients.

DOSAGE AND ADMINISTRATION

Route: Buccal/Sub-lingual (spray under the patient's tongue and close mouth).

AGE	DOSE	CONCENTRATION	VOLUME
Adult	1-2 spray	400 micrograms per dose spray	N/A
Adult	2 milligrams	2 milligrams per tablet	1 tablet
Adult	3 milligrams	3 milligrams per tablet	1 tablet
Adult	5 milligrams	5 milligrams per tablet	1 tablet

The mucosa must be moist for GTN absorption, moisten if necessary.

Remove tablet if side effects occur e.g. hypotension.

The effect of the first dose should be assessed over 5 minutes. Further doses can be given every 5-10 minutes as indicated provided systolic blood pressure is >90mmHg.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Glyceryl trinitrate causes vasodilatation, with enlargement of the venous system bed. This causes pooling of blood in the veins with reduction in “pre-load” to the heart. This relieves the work of the left ventricle, and secondarily reduces lung vessel congestion, lessening breathlessness and is the primary treatment in acute left ventricular failure.

When using buccal nitrates the patient may spit out the remainder of the tablet when their chest pain is relieved. This may avoid the onset of headache.

SIDE EFFECTS

Throbbing headache.

Flushing.

Dizziness.

Postural hypotension.

Tachycardia.

These side effects are mainly related to a generalised vasodilation effect of this drug and are usually transient.