

# Sparsentan

Sparsentan is a medicine used to treat primary immunoglobulin A nephropathy (IgAN) in adults by lowering the amount of protein leaking into the urine.

## What is IgAN?

IgAN is the most common form of glomerulonephritis, an inflammation of the glomeruli (small blood vessels), which is the filtration unit of the kidney. The disease is caused by the body's immune system producing a faulty version of an antibody called immunoglobulin A (IgA). This then builds up in the glomeruli, which causes damages, causing the kidney to leak blood and protein into the urine.

## How does sparsentan work?

Sparsentan works by blocking two hormones (called endothelin and angiotensin) that play a role in the kidney causing inflammation that leads to kidney damage. Blocking these receptors lowers the amount of protein that leaks into the urine, helping to slow down progression of kidney disease.

## What do I need to know before I start taking sparsentan?

Sparsentan should not be taken if you have liver problems or low blood pressure.

## How do I take it?

- Sparsentan is available as 200 mg and 400 mg tablets.
- The starting dose is one 200 mg tablet once a day for 14 days.
- After 14 days, the dose will increase to 400 mg (two tablets containing 200 mg or one tablet containing 400 mg), depending on how well you tolerate sparsentan.

## Do I need any special checks while on sparsentan?

It is important to have regular bloods tests while taking sparsentan. If you do not have regular blood tests, it will not be safe for your clinician to prescribe sparsentan for you. You will also need to regularly check your blood pressure at home so that your clinician safely prescribes the correct dose for you.

## Does sparsentan interfere with my other medicines?

Sparsentan can interact with other medication. You should tell your clinician of other medication you are taking before starting sparsentan.

Other medicines which can cause problems with sparsentan include:

- Similar medicines, called ACE inhibitors (such as enalapril or Lisinopril) or ARBs (such as losartan, candesartan), normally used to treat high blood pressure. Taking both can lead to reduced blood pressure.
- Spironolactone or eplerenone – normally used to remove excess fluid.
- Potassium supplements.
- Itraconazole, fluconazole – medicines to treat fungal infections.
- Clarithromycin, erythromycin, rifampicin – medicines to treat infections.
- St John's Wort – supplement medication for depression.
- Medicines to prevent transplant rejection, such as tacrolimus and sirolimus. Increased risk of high potassium levels and risk of angioedema.

Always check with your doctor or pharmacist first before starting any new medication.

## Can sparsentan cause side effects?

All medicines can cause unwanted side effects; some side effects can be serious. Side effects that may be experienced include:

### Very common (may affect more than 1 and 10 people)

- Low blood pressure (hypotension).

### Common (may affect up to 1 in 10 people)

- Feeling dizzy or light-headed on standing or sitting up because of a drop in blood pressure.
- Dizziness.
- High blood potassium levels, as measured in blood tests.
- Accumulation of fluid in the body.
- Changes in kidney function and liver function, as measured in blood tests.

### Uncommon (may affect up to 1 in 100 people)

- Low levels of red blood cells (anaemia)

## What happens if I forget to take a dose?

Skip the missed dose, then take the next dose at your regularly scheduled time. Do not take a double dose to make up for a forgotten dose.

## Is sparsentan okay in pregnancy and breastfeeding?

Sparsentan should be avoided if you are pregnant or breastfeeding. If you are planning to become pregnant while you are taking sparsentan, you should discuss this with your clinician. Women should take a reliable form of birth control while taking sparsentan and for 1 month after stopping.

## Anything else I should know?

Sparsentan should be stopped if you become dehydrated with diarrhoea and vomiting or other acute illness. The drug can then be restarted when you have recovered.

## Top tips

- Swallow whole with a full glass of water to avoid the bitter taste.
- Have your blood tests regularly. The team will not be able to prescribe your sparsentan safely if you do not have regular blood tests.
- Let the team know when you have 2 weeks of tablets remaining to allow time for blood tests to be checked and for new medication supply to be organised.
- Sparsentan will be reviewed at 36 weeks and may be stopped following this.

## Further information

- **Kidney Care UK** [www.kidneycareuk.org](http://www.kidneycareuk.org)
- **National kidney Federation** <https://www.kidney.org.uk>

## Useful contact details

### East and North Hertfordshire Teaching NHS Trust:

- Website [www.enherts-tr.nhs.uk](http://www.enherts-tr.nhs.uk)
- Telephone 01438 314333

### For patients under the Renal Team

#### Renal Pharmacists (to order more medication):

- Telephone 01438 284677
- Email - renalpharmacists.enh-tr@nhs.net

#### Medicines information:

- Telephone 01438 286150
- Email - medinfo.enhtr@nhs.net

## Leaflet information

**You can request this information in a different format or another language; please speak to your doctor or nurse.**

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