

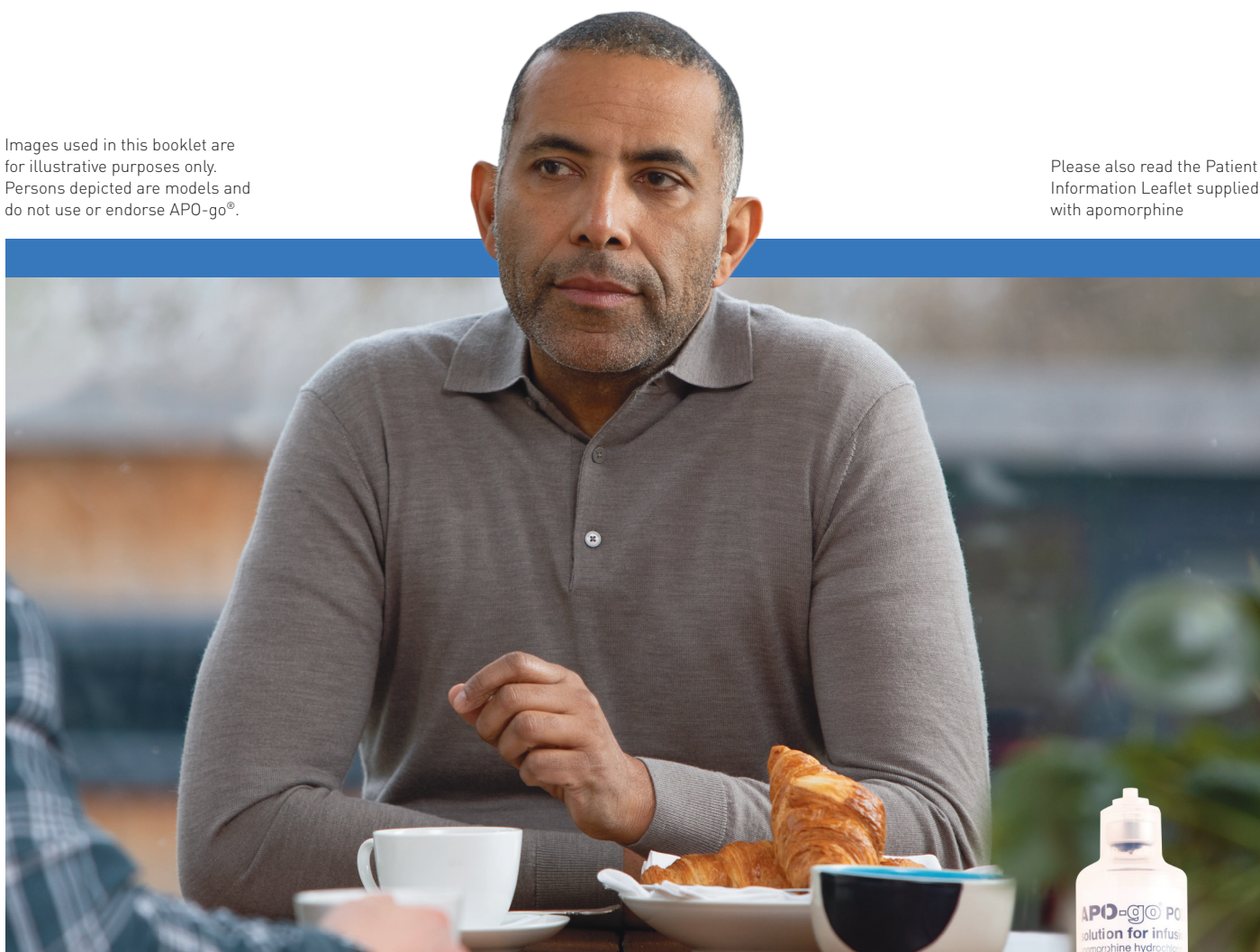
# Important information you need to know about:

# APO-go<sup>®</sup> POD

(apomorphine hydrochloride)

Images used in this booklet are for illustrative purposes only. Persons depicted are models and do not use or endorse APO-go<sup>®</sup>.

Please also read the Patient Information Leaflet supplied with apomorphine



This material is intended for patients who have been prescribed APO-go<sup>®</sup> POD with the CRONO<sup>®</sup> pump

If you get any side effects, talk to your doctor, pharmacist or nurse. This includes any possible side effects not listed in the package leaflet. You can report side effects directly via the Yellow Card Scheme at <http://www.mhra.gov.uk/yellowcard>. By reporting side effects, you can help provide more information on the safety of this medicine.



# Hello

If you are reading this, you or someone you know has been prescribed APO-go<sup>®</sup> POD by a healthcare professional. You will, understandably, have lots of questions about this treatment.

This guide contains the information you need about APO-go<sup>®</sup> POD before starting treatment.

As you will already be aware, the symptoms of Parkinson's disease can affect your life in many ways. During 'OFF' periods, your symptoms, such as tremors, rigidity and slowness, can make it difficult to get on with everyday tasks, such as shopping, playing sports or even getting dressed. On top of that, there is the added burden of coping with the other potential symptoms of the condition, such as pain, depression and tiredness. APO-go<sup>®</sup> POD is designed to treat the physical symptoms of Parkinson's to help you achieve more 'ON' time and better control your symptoms throughout your day.

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## The basics

In people with Parkinson's disease, the amount of a chemical called dopamine is reduced or absent in the brain. Dopamine helps to control and coordinate how the body moves, and it is the lack of dopamine that is believed to be behind the symptoms of Parkinson's.

### What is APO-go® and how does it work?

APO-go® is a treatment for Parkinson's. It contains a chemical called apomorphine hydrochloride, which has been used for the treatment of Parkinson's for over 30 years. Although they have similar chemical names, it is important to be aware that this medicine is completely different from morphine.

Apomorphine hydrochloride:

- Is not a narcotic or painkiller.
- Is not morphine.
- Is not associated with morphine-like addictive properties.

The medicine contains what is known as a dopamine agonist. It works by mimicking the effect of dopamine in the brain, making it an effective treatment for Parkinson's.

### Why have I been prescribed this medication?

When you were first diagnosed with Parkinson's, your symptoms were probably well controlled with oral medication. However, you may have gradually noticed that your tablets were not able to fully relieve your symptoms.



### What is an infusion?

An infusion means that a liquid medicine is slowly released into the body. The infusion gives you a continuous supply of apomorphine whilst the infusion is in progress providing relief from Parkinson's symptoms. APO-go® POD is delivered from a CRONO® Pump through an infusion line that is inserted into the area under the skin. This releases the medication gradually into the body. Receiving this continuously in this manner mirrors the way the body works to provide the brain with uninterrupted dopamine-like stimulation.

### Will the medicine affect the number of tablets that I have to take daily?

APO-go® can be used with oral Parkinson's medication. However, your healthcare professional may recommend that you need to take less oral medication in order to control your symptoms.

It is recommended that you follow the advice given to you by your doctor or Parkinson's nurse and always make sure that you stick to the treatment schedule you have been given. Don't be afraid to ask questions if you are not sure what to do.



### Using the CRONO® Pump

Like everything we eat, tablets need to be processed by the digestive system; once processed, the tablets can start to take effect on Parkinson's symptoms. However, as we get older, and as Parkinson's progresses, the body is less able to absorb and use the medication in tablets.

The infusion therapy is injected, which means it can bypass the digestive system and travel quickly through the bloodstream to the brain. As the medicine is absorbed completely by the body, it can help you get control over your symptoms.

### What does the pump look like?

The pump is small, lightweight and discreet. It is about the size of an average mobile phone and can be hidden under clothing by carrying the pump in a belt around your waist.

The needles used for the infusion are very fine and small. These needles are similar to the needle a person with diabetes may use to take their insulin.

The information provided in this booklet, along with one-to-one guidance from a specially trained healthcare professional, will show you how and where to administer your infusion so you can be comfortable and confident with setting up your infusion.

You may find it useful to have a friend or family member help you with setting up your infusion.

### When can APO-go® POD be used to manage my Parkinson's symptoms?

When a person is diagnosed with Parkinson's, oral medicines are often prescribed first, before any other treatments are considered. However, this medication can be used at any stage of your Parkinson's – patients can and do use this option for many years.

### Getting started on APO-go® POD

When you start receiving the infusion, your doctor or Parkinson's nurse will decide if a dose adjustment of your apomorphine or any other medications is required.



## Response test

### What is the apomorphine response test?

On the day of your test, your doctor or Parkinson's nurse may suggest for you to not take some of your Parkinson's medication so that you experience an 'OFF' episode. Before starting the infusion, your healthcare professional may wish to perform a medication response test. A response test helps identify what is the right dose of apomorphine to switch you 'ON' from an 'OFF' state.

During the response test, you will have a series of injections and movement assessments. The dose will be gradually increased with each injection, and at each dosing level, you'll be asked to try a number of simple tests to assess your movement, and help your doctor decide which dose works best for you.

Your doctor or Parkinson's nurse will monitor you throughout this process, answering any questions you may have.

### Other tests and medications

#### BLOOD PRESSURE

This medication may lower your blood pressure so it will be closely monitored. It should be measured before starting therapy and during the response test.

#### DOMPERIDONE

Apomorphine may initially cause nausea so an anti-sickness tablet such as domperidone may be prescribed for a short period before starting treatment. There are some anti-sickness tablets you shouldn't take as they could worsen your Parkinson's symptoms. If you are not sure you have been prescribed the right one contact your healthcare professional.

#### ECG

You may be prescribed a medication called domperidone to help with symptoms of nausea. Before starting domperidone, your circulatory system (heart and blood) will be assessed. You will need to have an electrocardiogram (ECG) to measure your heart rhythm and electrical activity before you undergo a response test or start infusion therapy and this may need to be repeated after you have started treatment.

#### BLOODS

Your healthcare professional may request some blood tests before starting APO-go® and during treatment, depending on your individual need and your hospital trust policy.

# Administration

## Getting started

Your treatment dose and how long you need to have the infusion will depend on your symptoms. Your doctor or Parkinson's nurse will discuss your individual treatment requirements with you and find the right schedule for you.

Most people start the infusion in the morning and stop it before they go to sleep. This allows for a full day's APO-go<sup>®</sup> POD treatment to be set up in the morning without needing to add any more medication later on, enabling you to leave it running for the rest of the day, whilst you carry on your daily activities.



## How do I assemble APO-go<sup>®</sup> POD?

APO-go<sup>®</sup> POD is simple to set up. You (and your care partner if appropriate) will be taught how to do this by a dedicated healthcare professional who is trained in assembling and administering APO-go<sup>®</sup> POD. You will also be provided with a separate set-up guide.

## HOW DO I INSERT THE INFUSION LINE?

The infusion line is usually inserted into the area under the skin. Your healthcare professional will explain how to do this, and there is more information in the 'Skin Management Guide'.

# Potential side effects of APO-go®

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

- Lumps under the skin at the site of injection.
- Hallucinations (seeing, hearing or feeling things that are not there).

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

- Feeling sick or being sick, particularly when starting this medication.
- Feeling tired or extremely sleepy.
- Confusion or hallucinations.
- Yawning.
- Feeling dizzy or light-headed when standing up.

Apomorphine has been associated with somnolence and episodes of sudden sleep onset. You should exercise caution whilst driving or operating machines during treatment with apomorphine.

**PLEASE REFER TO THE PATIENT INFORMATION LEAFLET FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ON ALL THE LISTED SIDE EFFECTS.**

**IF YOU GET ANY SIDE EFFECTS, TALK TO YOUR DOCTOR, PHARMACIST OR NURSE. THIS INCLUDES ANY POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS NOT LISTED IN THE PACKAGE LEAFLET. YOU CAN REPORT SIDE EFFECTS DIRECTLY VIA THE YELLOW CARD SCHEME AT [HTTP://WWW.MHRA.GOV.UK/YELLOWCARD](http://www.mhra.gov.uk/yellowcard). BY REPORTING SIDE EFFECTS, YOU CAN HELP PROVIDE MORE INFORMATION ON THE SAFETY OF THIS MEDICINE.**



# Practical advice

## How do I store this medication?

- Store in a safe place away from children and animals
- Keep out of direct sunlight and at room temperature (below 30°C). Do not keep in the fridge
- Do not use past the expiry date, or if the solution has turned green, cloudy, or you can see visible particles

It is good practice to check the white box on the cartridge for the expiry date and lot number, not the cardboard box, as the cartridge may not have been put back into the correct box after first opening.

**IS THE PUMP WATERPROOF?** No – always remove your pump before bathing or getting into the shower.

**IS THE PUMP SHOCKPROOF?** No – try not to drop your pump, and keep it away from hot surfaces or electrical appliances.

## Managing your ongoing APO-go® POD prescription and accessories

It is advisable to always have APO-go® POD supplies 3 weeks in advance of running out. This will ensure you have your next prescription available so you can continue treatment seamlessly. Always remember to order your infusion lines also, as these require a separate prescription. If you do run out, contact the pharmacy or person who prescribes apomorphine to organise a prescription as soon as possible. If you are unable to use apomorphine, contact your doctor or Parkinson's nurse for advice.

## What happens if I spill APO-go®?

There is no harm in spilling APO-go®, but in case of contact with the skin, clean the area with soap and water. If you experience any problems, contact your healthcare professional. It is important to be aware that this medication turns green when exposed to oxygen in the air, so can quickly stain.

## Travelling with APO-go® POD

You can travel and go on holiday while using APO-go® POD, but it's a good idea to plan ahead and make sure you have everything you need. If you are going abroad, for example, you will need to get a letter from your doctor or Parkinson's nurse explaining what apomorphine is for in case of any questioning from security. Also, make sure the letter also states that apomorphine hydrochloride is not a narcotic. A template letter is available from our 24-hour technical helpline: 0808 196 4242. You could also try contacting your travel operator (airline, ferry company, etc.) before you travel, to let them know in advance that you will be carrying your treatment in your luggage.

## Other things to consider when travelling

You may decide to carry your cartridges and infusion lines in either your hand luggage or your suitcase. Holiday pumps are available through customer services or by contacting your Britannia nurse specialist.

Whilst travelling, you should be aware of a few important points:

- Keep your cartridges in a hard container (to protect them during travel).
- Take a plastic container or a small sharps bin (to store used needles/equipment).
- Take your doctor's number (in case of an emergency).
- Keep APO-go® cartridges cool (below 30°C) when you travel and arrive at your destination.



## Additional support

### Britannia nurse specialist in APO-go® Therapy

You may be referred to a Britannia nurse specialist in APO-go® therapy by your healthcare professional. Not all areas will use this service.

**The Britannia Nurse Service** is a support service to assist healthcare professionals begin and maintain your treatment.

### The team consists of experienced specialist nurses that can provide you with:



Home visits



Telephone support

### The Britannia team also support your healthcare professional with:



Nurse-led clinics



Support in clinics



APO-go® treatment training and education

**The Britannia nurse specialist** does not take the place of your Parkinson's nurse, but is an additional service to help with your APO-go® treatment. They are not prescribers and can only provide information as agreed with your healthcare professional.

Should you have a question that is not related to your APO-go® therapy, your Parkinson's nurse or GP should be contacted.

**APO-go® TECHNICAL HELPLINE**  
0808 196 4242  
24 HOURS A DAY, 365 DAYS A YEAR

# Talking to your doctor or Parkinson's nurse

If you have any questions or concerns when using apomorphine do not hesitate to contact your doctor or Parkinson's nurse. The more information that you can provide to them during your appointment, the more support and advice they can give you.

## PRACTICAL TIPS TO MAKE FULL USE OF YOUR APPOINTMENT:



Record your symptoms in a diary, which you can refer to during your appointment



Make a list of things that you would like to talk to your doctor or Parkinson's nurse about prior to your appointment.



**If you get any side effects, talk to your doctor, pharmacist or nurse. This includes any possible side effects not listed in the package leaflet. You can report side effects directly via the Yellow Card Scheme at <http://www.mhra.gov.uk/yellowcard>. By reporting side effects, you can help provide more information on the safety of this medicine.**