

Fentanyl Sandoz patch

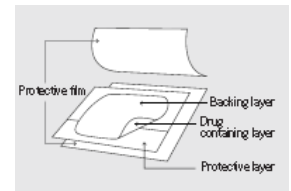
Patient Information - Canterbury Regional Cancer and Haematology Service (CRCHS)

What is a Fentanyl patch?

Fentanyl patch is a medicine that is used to relieve severe pain. It is formulated into a transparent patch that contains a medicine called Fentanyl. This is an opioid analgesic, similar to morphine.

Where do I put the patch?

Select a dry, non-hairy area on the upper body e.g. chest, upper arms or back. If the area has hair, use SCISSORS to clip the hair. Do not shave this area, as this might affect the rate of absorption through the skin. Clean the area with water only, and then dry thoroughly. Soaps, oils, lotions, alcohol or other products can affect the absorption rate, and may also cause skin irritation under the patch.



Getting the patch ready?

Each Fentanyl patch is individually sealed in its own protective pouch. When you are ready to use, cut or tear open the pouch and remove the patch. Do not apply the patch if it looks damaged in any way. Never divide or fold the patch. Each patch has a clear plastic backing that can be peeled off in two pieces. Peel off both parts of the protective liner. Avoid touching the adhesive side of the patch.

Putting the patch on

Apply the sticky side of the patch to the selected area of the skin. Press the patch on firmly, applying pressure with the palm of the hand for 30 seconds. Make sure the whole patch is in contact with the skin, especially around the edges. Rinse your hands well with water, **NOT SOAP**. Very occasionally, your doctor may recommend only removing half of the backing. This provides a smaller dose of medication. This should only be done under medical guidance.

Replacing or removing the patch

After 72 hours remove the patch. Apply a new patch on a different area of the skin using the procedure outlined above.

Will the first patch immediately relieve pain?

NO. Because the patch releases the Fentanyl slowly into your system, the very first patch you use will not provide immediate relief. During the first 24 hours on the patch you may require additional medication (as prescribed by your doctor) until the patch reaches full effect.

What if I experience pain while on Fentanyl patch?

As with all long-acting pain control medications, you may occasionally experience breakthrough pain while wearing a patch. On these occasions simply take short-acting oral medication as prescribed by your doctor. If you find that this happens frequently tell your doctor.

What if the patch doesn't stick properly?

If the patch does not stick properly, extra adhesive can be applied around the edges of the patch. You can use waterproof tape which is available from any pharmacy. A transparent covering can also be used over the patch. These can be supplied by your community nurse. Do not cover the patch with a bandage or dressing. It is important that the patch is clearly visible.

What if the patch falls off?

If the patch is not damaged or dirty, reapply using tape (as above) ensuring that the patch is in firm contact with your skin.

If you don't feel comfortable with this, simply apply a new patch to a different area as soon as possible.

While it is rare that a properly affixed patch will come off, you may wish to carry a spare patch as a precaution.

How do I remember when to change my patch?

If you have trouble remembering when to replace your patch, write the day, date and time you apply each patch on the medication box or in your diary.

REMEMBER TO CHANGE YOUR PATCH EVERY 72 HOURS (3 DAYS)

Can I swim or bathe with the patch?

Yes, you can bathe or swim as usual. However, be careful to not use bath oils or bath bubbles in the water and don't use soap in the area around the patch.

After bathing or swimming, pat the area dry around the patch. **DO NOT RUB IT.**

Why can't I use soap with the patch?

Soap may interfere with the absorption of the medication. Don't use it on, or even around the patch.

Remember this when you apply the patch – rinse hands with water, **NOT SOAP.**

What happens if I get a rash from wearing the patch?

A rash occurring locally around the edge of the patch is quite common, and a mild corticosteroid cream can be used to relieve itchiness under the guidance of your doctor.

However, if the rash is severe and occurs all over the body, it is recommended you remove the patch and consult a doctor as soon as possible.

What precautions should I take regarding external heat?

Avoid direct sun exposure of the patch to heat such as hot water bottles, saunas, heat lamps, intensive sunbathing.

Direct or prolonged exposure to such heat may cause an increase in the amount of the medication absorbed from the patch.

Can I stop with the patch if I feel better?

No. If you are feeling better, it is probably because the medication is working to control your pain.

You should not stop the therapy unless your doctor instructs you to do so.

How do I dispose of the patch?

After removing the patch, fold the sticky side onto itself and seal, before disposing of the patch in the rubbish.

Make sure the rubbish is out of reach of both children and pets.

Where should I store my fentanyl patches?

Store at room temperature.

Avoid temperature extremes, such as leaving it in direct sunlight or in a closed car.

As with all medication, keep fentanyl **OUT OF REACH OF CHILDREN.**

What side effects might I notice?

Constipation, restlessness, dry mouth, skin rash, sweating, confusion, breathing difficulties.

If you notice any of these or you have any concerns tell your doctor.

For more information about:

- your health and medication, go to www.healthinfo.org.nz
- hospital and specialist services, go to www.cdhb.health.nz