

# NABILONE

**Other NAMES:** Cesamet®

## WHY is this drug prescribed?

Nabilone is a narcotic drug used to treat severe nausea and vomiting. It is in a family of drugs called cannabinoids (eg. marijuana). Occasionally, it is also used to help improve appetite.

## HOW should this drug be taken?

Nabilone comes as 0.25, 0.5 and 1 mg capsules. The usual dosage of nabilone is 1 to 2 mg twice a day. Since each person responds differently to medical treatments, your doctor will recommend the dose and duration of therapy that is best for you.

Your dosage is:

0.25 mg capsule

0.5 mg capsule

1 mg capsule

\_\_\_ capsule (\_\_\_mg) \_\_\_times a day

Nabilone can be taken with or without food.

## What should you do if you FORGET a dose?

If you miss a dose of nabilone, take it as soon as possible. However, if it is time

for your next dose, do not double the dose, just carry on with your regular schedule.

## What ADVERSE EFFECTS can this drug cause? What should you do about them?

Nabilone can commonly cause **unsteadiness, dizziness, difficulty concentrating, drowsiness, dryness of the mouth, and/or headache.** Changes in vision, loss of appetite, muscle pain or weakness occur rarely.

These effects may go away during treatment as your body adjusts to the drug. However, notify your doctor if any of these effects continue or become bothersome.

Inform your doctor **immediately** if any of the following effects occur: changes in mood (depression, anxiety), confusion, difficulty breathing, fainting, irregular heartbeat, tremors, hallucinations and increased blood pressure as they may indicate an overdose.

**It is important that you keep your doctor appointments and come for your laboratory tests so that your progress can be followed.**

## What other PRECAUTIONS should you follow while using this drug?

Before starting nabilone, notify your doctor if you have liver disease or a history of emotional disorders such as depression, bipolar disease (manic depression), and schizophrenia (psychosis, hallucinations).

As this drug may cause some people to become dizzy, drowsy or less alert than normal, you should NOT drive, use machinery or do anything else that could be dangerous if you are dizzy or are not alert.

Nabilone can increase the effect of various drugs or substances. For example, it can increase the effects of alcohol and other central nervous system depressants such as sedatives, muscle relaxants, narcotics, drugs for seizures and antihistamines. Avoid taking alcohol while you are taking nabilone. Inform your doctor and pharmacist of all prescribed and non-prescribed drugs you are taking. As well, you should inform them of natural products you are taking. If you wish to start a new drug or natural product, please consult with your pharmacist before doing so.

Nabilone may cause dryness of the mouth. For temporary relief, sugarless candy or gum, ice or saliva substitutes may be used.

The safety of nabilone during pregnancy or during breastfeeding has not yet been established. Until more information is known, nabilone should NOT be used if you are pregnant. Also, breastfeeding should be avoided while you are taking nabilone. Discuss this with your doctor if this is a concern.

**How should this drug be STORED?**

Nabilone should be stored in a cool (15 - 30°C) dry place, protected from light and well out of the reach of children. Ensure that the drug has not expired by checking the expiry date (“EXP”) shown on the outside of the package.

Do not store in your bathroom or kitchen, as heat and moisture may cause the drug to be less active.

**If you have any questions or concerns about this drug or if you are experiencing adverse effects, please discuss them with your pharmacist, doctor or nurse.**

**Write questions or concerns down to ensure they are addressed.**

The following pharmacist is available to answer questions:

**Pharmacist:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Telephone:** \_\_\_\_\_

Reference: Product monograph Cesamet® (nabilone). Montréal, Qc, Canada: Valeant Canada Ltd., 2009. Prepared by the Ontario HIV Pharmacy Professional Specialty Group, 2003. Updated 2009.

Additional medication fact sheets and updates may be found at: [www.hivclinic.ca](http://www.hivclinic.ca)

***NABILONE***

***MEDICATION***

***FACT SHEET***