

## **Package Leaflet: Information for the user**

### **VOLTAROL® 12.5 mg and 100 mg Suppositories** (diclofenac sodium)

**Read all of this leaflet carefully before you start using this medicine because it contains important information for you.**

- Keep this leaflet. You may need to read it again.
- If you have any further questions, ask your doctor or pharmacist.
- This medicine has been prescribed for you only. Do not pass it onto others. It may harm them, even if their signs of illness are the same as yours.
- If you get any side effects, talk to your doctor or pharmacist. This includes any possible side effects not listed in this leaflet.
- This medicine will be referred to as Voltarol in this leaflet.

#### **What is in this leaflet**

1. What Voltarol is and what it is used for
2. What you need to know before you use Voltarol
3. How to use Voltarol
4. Possible side effects
5. How to store Voltarol
6. Contents of the pack and other information

## **1. What Voltarol is and what it is used for**

Diclofenac sodium, the active ingredient in Voltarol is one of a group of medicines called “non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs” (NSAIDs). NSAIDs reduce pain and inflammation. They have no effect on the causes of inflammation.

Voltarol is used to treat a number of painful conditions including:

- joint, muscle or tendon pain
- attacks of gout
- pain and swelling after surgery
- sprains, strains and other injuries
- gynaecology problems such as period pain
- painful ear, nose or throat infections
- migraine.

## **2. What you need to know before you use Voltarol**

#### **Do not use Voltarol if:**

- you think you may be allergic (hypersensitive) to diclofenac sodium or to any of the other ingredients of Voltarol (listed in Section 6). Signs of a hypersensitivity reaction include swelling of the face and mouth (angioedema), breathing problems, runny nose, skin rash or any other allergic type reaction
- you have now or have ever had a stomach (gastric) or duodenal (peptic) ulcer, or bleeding in the digestive tract (this can include blood in vomit, bleeding when emptying bowels, fresh blood in faeces or black, tarry faeces). This may have been when you used an NSAID before

- you are in the last three months of pregnancy
- you have severe kidney or liver problems
- you have ever had an allergic reaction (such as asthma, wheezing, skin rash, face swelling, runny nose) after taking medicines to treat pain and inflammation (NSAIDs) such as aspirin or ibuprofen
- you have heart disease (e.g. if you have had a heart attack, have angina or blockages in the arteries of your heart)
- you have cerebrovascular disease (e.g. if you have had a stroke, mini-stroke or have blockages of the arteries to the brain)
- you have peripheral arterial disease (e.g. poor circulation or blockages of the arteries to the legs and feet)
- you have severe heart failure)
- you have a painful rectum (sometimes with bleeding and discharge).

Do not use Voltarol if any of the above apply to you. If you are not sure, talk to your doctor or pharmacist before using Voltarol.

### **Warnings and precautions**

Talk to your doctor or pharmacist before using your medicine if:

- if you have diabetes
- if you smoke
- If you have angina, blood clots, high blood pressure, raised cholesterol
- you have bowel problems such as ulcerative colitis or Crohn's disease
- you have kidney or liver problems
- you have any blood or bleeding problems – your doctor will take regular blood tests
- you have a condition called porphyria
- you have ever had asthma, other breathing problems (such as chronic obstructive pulmonary diseases, COPD) or often get chest infections
- you have ever had hay fever or nasal polyps
- you have any allergies
- you could be dehydrated
- you have ever had stomach or bowel problems.

If any of the above apply to you (or you are not sure), talk to your doctor or pharmacist before using Voltarol.

If you have significant risk factors for cardiovascular disease such as high blood pressure, abnormally high levels of fat (cholesterol, triglycerides) in your blood, diabetes, or if you smoke, and your doctor decides to prescribe Voltarol, you must use the lowest effective dosage for the shortest duration necessary.

### **Look out for serious side effects**

Voltarol can cause some serious side effects. These are listed at the beginning of Section 4. You will need to look out for these while you are taking Voltarol. If you get a serious side effect you need to stop using Voltarol and talk to your doctor straight away. Side effects may be minimised by using the lowest effective dose for the shortest duration necessary.

### **Risk of heart attack or stroke with Voltarol**

There is a small increased risk of heart attack or stroke when you are using any medicine like Voltarol. The risk is higher when you are taking higher doses for a long time. Always follow the doctor's instructions on how much to use and how long to use it for. If, at any time while taking Voltarol you

experience any signs or symptoms of problems with your heart or blood vessels such as chest pain, shortness of breath, weakness, or slurring of speech, contact your doctor immediately. **Signs of infection** Because it is an anti-inflammatory medicine, Voltarol may reduce the symptoms of infection, for example, headache and high temperature. If you feel unwell and need to see a doctor, remember to tell him or her that you are using Voltarol.

### **Test and checks**

If you have significant risks for heart disease, your doctor will periodically re-evaluate whether you should continue treatment with Voltarol.

If you have any liver impairment, kidney impairment or blood impairment, you will have blood tests during treatment. These will monitor the function of your liver, kidney or your blood count. Your doctor will take these blood tests into consideration to decide if Voltarol needs to be discontinued or if the dose needs to be changed.

### **If you are elderly or underweight**

If you are elderly or underweight you may be more sensitive to the effects of Voltarol than other adults. Follow the doctor's instructions carefully. Try to use the smallest amount of Voltarol that gives you relief, for the shortest possible time. Tell your doctor straight away if you get any side effects, especially stomach problems.

### **Children and adolescents**

The 100 mg strength of Voltarol is not recommended for use in children and adolescents below 18 years. The 12.5 mg strength of Voltarol can be used in children from 1 year of age. Please refer to Section 3 'How to take Voltarol' for information regarding the specific dosage for children and adolescents.

### **Other medicines and Voltarol**

Please tell your doctor or pharmacist if you are taking or have recently taken any other medicines. This includes medicines obtained without a prescription, including herbal medicines.

In particular, tell your doctor or pharmacist if you are taking any of the following medicines:

- medicines to treat diabetes
- anticoagulants (blood thinning tablets like warfarin)
- diuretics (water tablets)
- lithium (used to treat some mental problems)
- methotrexate (for some inflammatory diseases and some cancers)
- ciclosporin , tacrolimus (medicines primarily used in patients who have received organ transplants)
- Trimethoprim (a medicine used to prevent or treat urinary tract infections).
- quinolone antibiotics (for infections)
- voriconazole (for fungal infections)
- any other NSAID or COX-2 (cyclo-oxygenase-2) inhibitor, for example aspirin or ibuprofen
- digoxin (used to treat heart problems)
- medicines known as SSRIs used to treat depression
- oral steroids (an anti-inflammatory drug)
- phenytoin (used to treat seizures)

- medicines used to treat heart conditions or high blood pressure, for example beta-blockers or ACE inhibitors.
  - colestipol and cholestyramine (used to treat high cholesterol). These medicines can reduce the effect of Voltarol. Take Voltarol at least 1 hour before or 4 to 6 hours after taking these medicines.
- If any of the above apply to you (or you are not sure), talk to your doctor or pharmacist before using Voltarol.

#### **Fertility, pregnancy and breast-feeding**

Talk to your doctor before using this medicine if you are pregnant, might become pregnant or are breast-feeding.

- Using Voltarol may make it more difficult to get pregnant. You should talk to your doctor if you are planning to become pregnant or if you have problems getting pregnant. Do not take Voltarol if you are in the last 3 months of pregnancy as it could harm your unborn child or cause problems at delivery. You should not take Voltarol during the first 6 months of pregnancy unless absolutely necessary.
- Do not breast-feed if you are using Voltarol. This is because small amounts may pass into the mother's milk.

#### **Driving and using machines**

Very occasionally people have reported that Voltarol has made them feel dizzy, tired or sleepy. Problems with eyesight have also been reported. If you are affected in this way you should not drive or use any tools or machines.

### **3. How to use Voltarol**

**Always use this medicine exactly as your doctor has told you. You should check with your doctor if you are not sure.**

#### **Using this medicine**

- Suppositories are designed for insertion into the back passage (rectum). **Never take them by mouth.** The doctor may also prescribe another medicine to protect the stomach to be taken at the same time, particularly if you have had stomach problems before, or if you are elderly, or taking certain medicines as well.
- The number of suppositories you need will depend on the strength which the doctor has given you.

#### **How much to use:**

##### **Adults**

- The recommended starting dose is 100 mg to 150 mg each day.
- In milder cases, as well as for long term treatment, 75 mg to 100 mg each day is usually enough.
- Voltarol suppositories are normally inserted two or three times a day up to a maximum total daily dose of 150 mg.
- Voltarol suppositories of 100 mg are used once a day and can be taken in combination with Voltarol Tablets up to a maximum total of 150 mg per day of diclofenac.
- For painful periods, the recommended starting dose is 50 mg to 100 mg as soon as you feel the first symptoms. Continue with 50 mg up to three times a day for a few days, as needed. If the daily dose of 150 mg does not provide enough pain relief over 2 to 3 periods, your doctor may ask you take up to 200 mg each day during your next period.
- For migraine, the recommended starting dose is 100 mg as soon as you feel the first signs of an attack. If pain relief is not enough, you may use another suppository of up to 100 mg on the same

day. If you need further treatment on the following days, do not take more than 150 mg per day, used in separate doses.

#### **The elderly**

Your doctor may give you a dose that is lower than the usual adult dose if you are elderly.

#### **Children and adolescents**

Your child's doctor will work out the dose that is suitable for your child. They will tell you how many suppositories to give them and how often.

- The 100 mg strength of Voltarol is not recommended for use in children and adolescents below 18 years. The 12.5 mg strength of Voltarol can be used in children from 1 year of age.
- Doses vary with age, but the recommended dose is between 0.5 mg and 2 mg for each kg of bodyweight. The doctor may raise this if required.
- The maximum dose for children is 150 mg in a day.

#### **How to insert the suppositories**

- Empty your bowels before inserting a suppository.
- Wash your hands.
- If the suppository is too soft to insert, chill it in the refrigerator for a few minutes or hold it under cold water *before* taking off the foil.
- Take off all the foil from the suppository.
- Moisten the suppository with cold water.
- Do not break the suppositories, as incorrect storage conditions can lead to uneven distribution of the active substance.
- Lie on one side with your knees pulled up towards your chest.
- Gently push the suppository pointed end first into your back passage (rectum) with your finger. Push the suppository in as far as possible as shown in the diagram.
- Lower your legs and, if possible, stay still for a few minutes.
- If you feel as though you need to push the suppository out, try to resist this by lying still with your buttocks pressed together. It is important to keep the suppository in the rectum to allow it to melt and the medicine to be absorbed. Pushing the suppository high into the rectum with your finger will help to reduce this feeling.
- Wash your hands.

The procedure is the same for a child. Once they have emptied their bowels, get them to lie down on their front or side. Gently push the suppository into the child's back passage until it disappears. Try and stop your child from moving around for a few minutes to reduce the risk of the suppository coming out.

#### **If you forget to use Voltarol**

If you forget to use a suppository, use one as soon as you remember. However, if it is nearly time for your next dose, just use the next dose and forget about the one you missed. Do not use a double dose to make up for a forgotten dose.

#### **If you use more Voltarol than you should**

If you accidentally use too many suppositories or use them too often, tell your doctor or go to your nearest casualty department straight away. Take your medicine pack with you so that people can see what you have taken. The following effects may happen: vomiting, bleeding in your stomach, diarrhoea, feeling dizzy, hearing problems or fits. In severe overdose kidney or liver problems can happen.

#### **If you stop taking Voltarol**

Keep using the suppositories for as long as you have been told unless you have any problems. In that case, check with your doctor.

If you have any further questions on the use of this medicine, ask your doctor or pharmacist.

#### 4. Possible side effects

Like all medicines, Voltarol can cause side effects, although not everybody gets them. The following side effects may happen with this medicine:

**Some side effects could be serious. Stop using Voltarol and see a doctor straight away, if you notice any of the following serious side effects - you may need urgent medical treatment:**

- Chest pain or tightness with shortness of breath (*may affect between 1 and 10 in every 1000 patients*)
- Breathlessness, difficulty of breathing when lying down, swelling of the feet or legs (*may affect between 1 and 10 in every 1000 patients*)
- Vomiting of blood, bleeding from the bowel (*may affect from less than 1 to 10 in every 10,000 patients*)
- Sudden slurred speech, facial drooping, weakness, disorientation, or speech problems (*may affect from less than 1 to 10 in every 10,000 patients*)
- allergic reactions which can include skin rash, itching, bruising, painful red areas, peeling or blistering, wheezing or shortness of breath ("bronchospasm"), swollen face, lips hands or fingers, hypotension (low blood pressure) and fainting (*may affect from less than 1 to 10 in every 10,000 patients*)

The following side effects have also been reported in patients taking Voltarol

*These rare or very rare side effects may affect from less than 1 to 10 in every 10,000 patients*

- allergic reactions which can include skin rash, itching, bruising, painful red areas, peeling or blistering, wheezing or shortness of breath ("bronchospasm"), swollen face, lips, hands or fingers, hypotension (low blood pressure) and fainting
- stomach pain, indigestion, heartburn, wind, feeling sick (nausea), or being sick (vomiting)
- any sign of bleeding in your stomach or intestine, for example, when emptying your bowels, blood in vomit, or black tarry faeces
- yellowing of your skin or the whites of your eyes
- pain in your abdomen and lower back, with feeling or being sick or loss of appetite (possible signs of pancreatitis)
- persistent sore throat or high temperature
- an unexpected change in the amount of urine produced and/or its appearance
- bruising more easily than usual
- frequent sore throats or infections
- fits, headaches together with a dislike of bright lights, fever and a stiff neck
- headaches and dizziness (signs of high blood pressure, hypertension)
- serious skin rashes including Stevens-Johnson syndrome and Lyell's syndrome
- sudden severe headache, nausea, dizziness, numbness, inability or difficulty to speak, paralysis (possible signs of stroke)

Stop using Voltarol and see a doctor straight away if you notice any of the side effects above.

#### Other side effects

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

- stomach pain, heartburn, nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea, indigestion, wind, loss of appetite
- headache, dizziness, vertigo
- skin rash or spots
- raised levels of liver enzymes in the blood
- irritation in or around your rectum.

**Rare (may affect up to 1 in 1,000 people)**

- stomach ulcers or bleeding (there have been very rarely reported cases resulting in death, particularly in the elderly)
- drowsiness, tiredness
- skin rash and itching
- fluid retention, symptoms of which include swollen ankles
- painful rectum (sometimes with bleeding and discharge).

**Very rare (may affect up to 1 in 10,000 people)**Effects on the nervous system:

Tingling or numbness in the fingers, tremor, blurred or double vision, hearing loss or impairment, tinnitus (ringing in the ears), sleeplessness, nightmares, mood changes, depression, anxiety, mental health disorders, confusion, hallucinations, malaise, disorientation and loss of memory.

Effects on the stomach and digestive system:

Constipation, worsening of piles, inflammation of the tongue, taste changes, mouth ulcers, problems with your food pipe, lower gut disorders (including inflammation of the colon).

Effects on the heart, chest or blood:

Palpitations (fast or irregular heart beat), inflammation of blood vessels (vasculitis), inflammation of the lung (pneumonitis), congestive heart failure, blood disorders (including anaemia).

Effects on the liver or kidneys:

Kidney or liver disorders, presence of blood or protein in the urine.

Effects on skin or hair:

Skin rashes which may be made worse by exposure to sunlight, hair loss.

If you get any side effects, talk to your doctor or pharmacist. This includes any possible side effects not listed in this leaflet.

**Reporting of side effects**

If you get any side effects, talk to your doctor, pharmacist or nurse. This includes any possible side effects not listed in this leaflet. You can also report side effects directly (see details below). By reporting side effects you can help provide more information on the safety of this medicine. FREEPOST, IMB Pharmacovigilance Section, Earlsfort Terrace, Dublin 2, Ireland. Tel: +353 1 6764971, Fax: +353 1 6762517, Website: [www.imb.ie](http://www.imb.ie), e-mail: [imbpharmacovigilance@imb.ie](mailto:imbpharmacovigilance@imb.ie).

## 5. How to store Voltarol

- Keep this medicine of the sight and reach of children.
- Do not use after the expiry date which is stated on the label and carton after 'EXP'. The expiry date refers to the last day of that month.
- Store in the original package.
- Store below 30°C.
- Do not throw away medicines via wastewater or household waste. Ask your pharmacist how to throw away medicines you no longer use. These measures will help to protect the environment.

## 6. Contents of the pack and other information

### What Voltarol Suppositories contains

- The active substance is diclofenac sodium. Each 12.5mg suppository contains diclofenac sodium 12.5mg. Each 100mg suppository contains diclofenac sodium 100mg.
- The other ingredient is hard fat.

### What Voltarol Suppositories look like and the contents of the pack

- Voltarol suppositories are yellowish white, torpedo-shaped suppositories.
- Voltarol Suppositories come in packs of 10.

### Marketing Authorisation Holder and Manufacturer

Novartis Pharmaceuticals UK Limited, Frimley Business Park, Frimley, Camberley, Surrey, GU16 7SR, UK.

### Irish Company Address

Novartis Ireland Limited, Beech House, Beech Hill Office Campus, Clonskeagh, Dublin 4.

This leaflet was last approved on: February 2014