

## Package leaflet: Information for the patient

### Zispin 15 mg/ml oral solution

Mirtazapine

**Read all of this leaflet carefully before you start taking 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 on to 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. See section 4.

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

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

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

Zispin is one of a group of medicines called **antidepressants**.

Zispin is used to treat depressive illness in adults.

Zispin will take 1 to 2 weeks before it starts working. After 2 to 4 weeks you may start feeling better.

You must talk to your doctor if you do not feel better or if you feel worse after 2 to 4 weeks. More information is in section 3 heading "When can you expect to start feeling better".

#### **2. What you need to know before you take Zispin**

##### **Do not take Zispin:**

- if you are allergic to mirtazapine or any of the other ingredients of this medicine (listed in section 6). If so, you must talk to your doctor as soon as you can before taking Zispin.
- if you are taking or have recently taken (within the last two weeks) medicines called monoamine oxidase inhibitors (MAO-Is).

##### **Warnings and precautions**

Talk to your doctor or pharmacist before taking Zispin.

##### **Children and adolescents**

Zispin should normally not be used for children and adolescents under 18 years because efficacy was not demonstrated. Also, you should know that patients under 18 have an increased risk of side-effects such as suicide attempt, suicidal thoughts and hostility (predominantly aggression, oppositional behaviour and anger) when they take this class of medicines. Despite this, your doctor may prescribe Zispin for patients under 18 because he/she decides that this is in their best interests. If your doctor has prescribed Zispin for a patient under 18 and you want to discuss this, please go back to your doctor. You should inform your doctor if any of the symptoms listed above develop or worsen when patients under 18 are taking Zispin. Also, the long-term safety effects concerning growth, maturation and cognitive and behavioural development of Zispin in this age group have not yet been demonstrated. In addition, significant weight gain has been observed in this age category more often when treated with Zispin compared with adults.

### Thoughts of suicide and worsening of your depression

If you are depressed you can sometimes have thoughts of harming or killing yourself. These may be increased when first starting antidepressants, since these medicines all take time to work, usually about two weeks but sometimes longer.

You may be more likely to think like this:

- if you have previously had thoughts about killing or harming yourself.
- if you are a young adult. Information from clinical trials has shown an increased risk of suicidal behaviour in adults aged less than 25 years with psychiatric conditions who were treated with an antidepressant.

→ If you have thoughts of harming or killing yourself at any time, contact your doctor or go to a hospital straightaway.

**You may find it helpful to tell a relative or close friend** that you are depressed, and ask them to read this leaflet. You might ask them to tell you if they think your depression is getting worse, or if they are worried about changes in your behaviour.

Also take special care with Zispin

- if you have, or have ever had one of the following conditions.
  - Tell your doctor about these conditions before taking Zispin, if not done previously
  - **seizures** (epilepsy). If you develop seizures or your seizures become more frequent, stop taking Zispin and contact your doctor immediately;
  - **liver disease**, including jaundice. If jaundice occurs, stop taking Zispin and contact your doctor immediately;
  - **kidney disease**;
  - **heart disease**, or **low blood pressure**;
  - **schizophrenia**. If psychotic symptoms, such as paranoid thoughts become more frequent or severe, contact your doctor straightaway;
  - **manic depression** (alternating periods of feeling elated/overactivity and depressed mood). If you start feeling elated or over-excited, stop taking Zispin and contact your doctor immediately;
  - **diabetes** (you may need to adjust your dose of insulin or other antidiabetic medicines);
  - **eye disease**, such as increased pressure in the eye (glaucoma);
  - **difficulty in passing water** (urinating), which might be caused by an enlarged prostate.
  - **certain kinds of heart conditions** that may change your heart rhythm, a recent heart attack, heart failure, or take certain medicines that may affect the heart's rhythm.
- if you develop signs of infection such as inexplicable high fever, sore throat and mouth ulcers.
  - Stop taking Zispin and consult your doctor immediately for a blood test.
  - In rare cases these symptoms can be signs of disturbances in blood cell production in the bone marrow. While rare, these symptoms most commonly appear after 4-6 weeks of treatment.
- if you are an elderly person. You could be more sensitive to the side-effects of antidepressants.

### Other medicines and Zispin

Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you are taking, have recently taken or might take any other medicines.

**Do not take Zispin** in combination with:

- **monoamine oxidase inhibitors** (MAO inhibitors). Also, do not take Zispin during the two weeks after you have stopped taking MAO inhibitors. If you stop taking Zispin, do not take MAO inhibitors during the next two weeks either.  
Examples of MAO inhibitors are moclobemide, tranylcypromine (both are antidepressants) and selegiline (used for Parkinson's disease).

**Take care when** taking Zispin in combination with:

- **antidepressants such as SSRIs, venlafaxine and L-tryptophan or triptans** (used to treat migraine), **tramadol** (a pain-killer), **linezolid** (an antibiotic), **lithium** (used to treat some psychiatric conditions), **methylen blue** (used to treat high levels of methemoglobin in the blood) and **St. John's Wort – Hypericum perforatum preparations** (a herbal remedy for

depression). In very rare cases Zispin alone or the combination of Zispin with these medicines, can lead to a so-called serotonin syndrome. Some of the symptoms of this syndrome are: inexplicable fever, sweating, increased heart rate, diarrhoea, (uncontrollable) muscle contractions, shivering, overactive reflexes, restlessness, mood changes and unconsciousness. If you get a combination of these symptoms, talk to your doctor immediately.

- **the antidepressant nefazodone.** It can increase the amount of Zispin in your blood. Inform your doctor if you are using this medicine. It might be needed to lower the dose of Zispin, or when use of nefazodone is stopped, to increase the dose of Zispin again.
- **medicines for anxiety or insomnia** such as benzodiazepines;  
**medicines for schizophrenia** such as olanzapine;  
**medicines for allergies** such as cetirizine;  
**medicines for severe pain** such as morphine.  
In combination with these medicines Zispin can increase the drowsiness caused by these medicines.
- **medicines for infections:** medicines for bacterial infections (such as erythromycin, medicines for fungal infections (such as ketoconazole) and medicines for HIV/AIDS (such as HIV-protease inhibitors) and **drugs for stomach ulcers** (such as cimetidine).  
In combination with Zispin these medicines can increase the amount of Zispin in your blood. Inform your doctor if you are using these medicines. It might be needed to lower the dose of Zispin, or when these medicines are stopped, to increase the dose of Zispin again.
- **medicines for epilepsy** such as carbamazepine and phenytoin;  
**medicines for tuberculosis** such as rifampicin.  
In combination with Zispin these medicines can reduce the amount of Zispin in your blood. Inform your doctor if you are using these medicines. It might be needed to increase the dose of Zispin, or when these medicines are stopped to lower the dose of Zispin again.
- **medicines to prevent blood clotting** such as warfarin.  
Zispin can increase the effects of warfarin on the blood. Inform your doctor if you are using this medicine. In case of combination it is advised that a doctor monitors your blood carefully.
- **medicines that may affect the heart's rhythm** such as certain antibiotics and some anti-psychotics.

### **Zispin with food and alcohol**

You may get drowsy if you drink alcohol while you are taking Zispin.

You are advised not to drink any alcohol.

You can take Zispin with or without food.

### **Pregnancy and breast-feeding**

If you are pregnant or breast-feeding, think you may be pregnant or are planning to have a baby, ask your doctor or pharmacist for advice before taking this medicine.

Limited experience with Zispin administration to pregnant women does not indicate an increased risk. However, caution should be exercised when used during pregnancy.

If you use Zispin until, or shortly before birth, your baby should be supervised for possible adverse effects.

When taken during pregnancy, similar drugs (SSRIs) may increase the risk of a serious condition in babies, called persistent pulmonary hypertension of the newborn (PPHN), making the baby breathe faster and appear bluish. These symptoms usually begin during the first 24 hours after the baby is born. If this happens to your baby you should contact your midwife and/or doctor immediately.

### **Driving and using machines**

Zispin can affect your concentration or alertness. Make sure these abilities are not affected before you drive or operate machinery. If your doctor has prescribed Zispin for a patient under 18 years make sure the concentration and alertness is not affected before participation in traffic (e.g. on bicycle).

**Zispin oral solution contains maltitol liquid.**

Zispin oral solution contains maltitol liquid. If you have been told by your doctor that you have intolerance for some sugars, contact your doctor before taking this medicinal product.

**Zispin oral solution contains small amounts of ethanol**

Zispin oral solution contains small amounts of ethanol (alcohol), less than 100 mg per daily dose.

**3. How to take Zispin**

Always take this medicine exactly as your doctor or pharmacist has told you. Check with your doctor or pharmacist if you are not sure.

**How much to take**

**The recommended starting dose is 15 or 30 mg every day.** Your doctor may advise you to increase your dose after a few days to the amount that is best for you (between 15 and 45 mg per day). The dose is usually the same for all ages. However, if you are an elderly person or if you have renal or liver disease, your doctor may adapt the dose.

**When to take Zispin**

→ Take Zispin at the same time each day.

It is best to take Zispin as a single dose before you go to bed. However your doctor may suggest to split your dose of Zispin – once in the morning and once at night-time before you go to bed. The higher dose should be taken before you go to bed.

**Take the oral solution as follows**

Take the oral solution orally. Drink your prescribed dose of Zispin oral solution in a glass or cup mixed with some water. Zispin oral solution comes with a metering pump to help you measure your dose.

**Preparing the Zispin metering pump for use**

Before you take Zispin, you need to fit the pump onto the bottle.

**1. Take the screw cap off the bottle**

Press the cap downwards and turn it anticlockwise to break the seal. Keep pressing and turning to unscrew the cap. This procedure is given in symbolic instructions on the top of the screw cap.

**2. Fit the metering pump onto the bottle**

Take the pump out of its bag. Fit it onto the bottle, putting the plastic tube inside the bottle. Press the pump onto the top of the bottle, and turn it clockwise until it clicks tightly into place. Tighten the pump a little more to make sure it is firmly in place.

**3. Turn the nozzle to the open position**

The nozzle has two positions – locked and open. When it is locked, no liquid will come out. To open the nozzle, turn it anticlockwise as far as it will go (about one-quarter turn).

**4. 'Prime' the metering pump before you take Zispin**

The very first time you press the pump, it will not measure out the right amount of Zispin solution. You need to prime it before your first dose.

- Place the bottle on a flat surface.
- Hold a glass or cup under the nozzle (*see picture*).
- Press the nozzle down as far as it will go, three times.
- Rinse away the liquid that comes out.

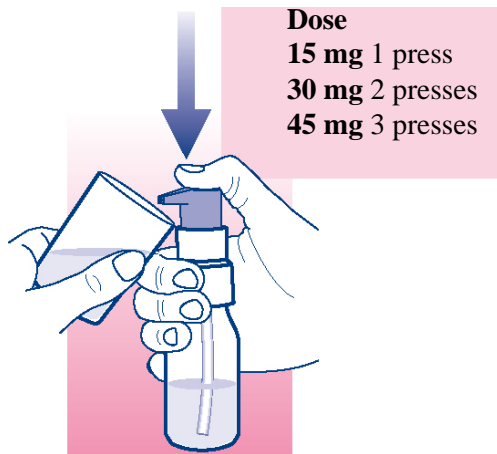
The pump is now ready for use.

**Taking your dose of Zispin**

The pump is used to measure your dose.

1. Place the bottle on a flat surface.

2. Pour a little water into a glass or cup, and hold it under the nozzle.
3. Each time you press the nozzle, the pump dispenses 15 mg of Zispin. Press the nozzle down as far as it will go. Use a firm, smooth action - not too slow.
4. You may need to press the nozzle more than once to get the dose your doctor has prescribed (*see picture*).
5. Drink the mixture all at once.



#### **When can you expect to start feeling better**

Usually Zispin will start working after 1 to 2 weeks and after 2 to 4 weeks you may start to feel better. It is important that, during the first few weeks of the treatment, you talk with your doctor about the effects of Zispin:

→ 2 to 4 weeks after you have started taking Zispin, talk to your doctor about how this medicine has affected you.

If you still don't feel better, your doctor may prescribe a higher dose. In that case, talk to your doctor again after another 2 to 4 weeks.

Usually you will need to take Zispin until your symptoms of depression have disappeared for 4 to 6 months.

#### **If you take more Zispin than you should**

→ If you or someone else has taken too much Zispin, call a doctor straightaway.

The most likely signs of an overdose of Zispin (without other medicines or alcohol) are **drowsiness, disorientation and increased heart rate**. The symptoms of a possible overdose may include changes to your heart rhythm (fast, irregular heartbeat) and/or fainting which could be symptoms of a life-threatening condition known as Torsade de Pointes.

#### **If you forget to take Zispin**

If you are supposed to take your dose **once a day**

- Do not take a double dose to make up for a forgotten dose. Take your next dose at the normal time.

If you are supposed to take your dose **twice a day**

- if you have forgotten to take your morning dose, simply take it together with your evening dose.
- if you have forgotten to take your evening dose, do not take it with the next morning dose; just skip it and continue with your normal morning and evening doses.
- if you have forgotten to take both doses, do not attempt to make up for the missed doses. Skip both doses and continue the next day with your normal morning and evening doses.

#### **If you stop taking Zispin**

→ Only stop taking Zispin in consultation with your doctor.

If you stop too early, your depression might come back. Once you are feeling better, talk to your doctor. Your doctor will decide when treatment can be stopped.

Do not suddenly stop taking Zispin, even when your depression has lifted. If you suddenly stop taking Zispin you may feel sick, dizzy, agitated or anxious, and have headaches. These symptoms can be avoided by stopping gradually. Your doctor will tell you how to decrease the dose gradually.

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

#### **4. Possible side effects**

Like all medicines, this medicine can cause side effects, although not everybody gets them.

**If you experience any of the following serious side effects, stop taking mirtazapine and tell your doctor immediately.**

**Uncommon** (may affect up to 1 in 100 people):

- feeling elated or emotionally 'high' (mania)

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

- yellow colouring of eyes or skin; this may suggest disturbance in liver function (jaundice)

**Not known** (frequency cannot be estimated from the available data):

- signs of infection such as sudden unexplainable high fever, sore throat and mouth ulcers (agranulocytosis). In rare cases mirtazapine can cause disturbances in the production of blood cells (bone marrow depression). Some people become less resistant to infection because mirtazapine can cause a temporary shortage of white blood cells (granulocytopenia). In rare cases mirtazapine can also cause a shortage of red and white blood cells, as well as blood platelets (aplastic anemia), a shortage of blood platelets (thrombocytopenia) or an increase in the number of white blood cells (eosinophilia).
- epileptic attack (convulsions)
- a combination of symptoms such as inexplicable fever, sweating, increased heart rate, diarrhoea, (uncontrollable) muscle contractions, shivering, overactive reflexes, restlessness, mood changes, unconsciousness and increased salivation. In very rare cases these can be signs of serotonin syndrome.
- thoughts of harming or killing yourself
- severe skin reactions (Stevens-Johnson Syndrome, toxic epidermal necrolysis)

**Other possible side effects with mirtazapine are:**

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

- increase in appetite and weight gain
- drowsiness or sleepiness
- headache
- dry mouth

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

- lethargy
- dizziness
- shakiness or tremor
- nausea
- diarrhoea
- vomiting
- constipation
- rash or skin eruptions (exanthema)

- pain in your joints (arthralgia) or muscles (myalgia)
- back pain
- feeling dizzy or faint when you stand up suddenly (orthostatic hypotension)
- swelling (typically in ankles or feet) caused by fluid retention (oedema)
- tiredness
- vivid dreams
- confusion
- feeling anxious
- sleeping problems

**Uncommon** (may affect up to 1 in 100 people):

- abnormal sensation in the skin e.g. burning, stinging, tickling or tingling (paraesthesia)
- restless legs
- fainting (syncope)
- sensations of numbness in the mouth (oral hypoaesthesia)
- low blood pressure
- nightmares
- feeling agitated
- hallucinations
- urge to move

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

- muscle twitching or contractions (myoclonus)
- aggression
- abdominal pain and nausea; this may suggest inflammation of the pancreas (pancreatitis)

**Not known** (frequency cannot be estimated from the available data):

- abnormal sensations in the mouth (oral paraesthesia)
- swelling in the mouth (mouth oedema)
- swelling throughout the body (generalized oedema)
- localized swelling
- hyponatraemia
- inappropriate anti-diuretic hormone secretion
- severe skin reactions (dermatitis bullous, erythema multiforme).
- sleep walking (somnambulism)
- speech disorder
- increased creatine kinase blood levels
- difficulty in passing urine (urinary retention)
- muscle pain, stiffness and/or weakness, darkening or discolouration of the urine (rhabdomyolysis)

**Additional side effects in children and adolescents**

In children under 18 years the following adverse events were observed commonly in clinical trials: significant weight gain, hives and increased blood triglycerides.

**Reporting of side effects**

If you get any side effects, talk to your doctor or pharmacist. This includes any possible side effects not listed in this leaflet. You can also report side effects directly via HPRA Pharmacovigilance, Earlsfort Terrace, IRL - Dublin 2; Tel: +353 1 6764971, Fax: +353 1 6762517. Website: [www.hpra.ie](http://www.hpra.ie); E-mail: [medsafety@hpra.ie](mailto:medsafety@hpra.ie). By reporting side effects you can help provide more information on the safety of this medicine.

## 5. How to store Zispin

Keep this medicine out of the sight and reach of children.

Do not use this medicine after the expiry date which is stated on the carton and the bottle. The expiry date refers to the last day of that month.

Do not store above 25 °C.

Do not use the bottle more than 6 weeks after opening.  
Make a note of the date of opening of the bottle.

Do not throw away any 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 Zispin contains

- The active substance is mirtazapine.  
Zispin 15 mg/ml oral solution contains 15 mg mirtazapine per ml solution.
- The other ingredients are L-methionine, sodium benzoate (E211), saccharin sodium (E954), citric acid monohydrate (E330), glycerol (E422), maltitol liquid (E965), orange tangerine flavour No.: PHL-132597 (contains ethanol) and purified water.

### What Zispin looks like and contents of the pack

Zispin oral solution is a clear, colourless - to pale yellow solution with a citrus-orange odour. The carton contains one brown glass bottle with 66 ml of Zispin oral solution and one metering pump. The bottle containing the oral solution is closed with a child-resistant screw cap and a seal which is broken when the cap is unscrewed. The metering pump is packed in a sealed plastic bag.

### Marketing Authorisation Holder:

Ireland is Merck Sharp & Dohme Ireland (Human Health) Ltd, Red Oak North, South County Business Park, Leopardstown, Dublin 18, Ireland.

### Manufacturer:

N.V. Organon, Kloosterstraat 6, 5349 AB, Oss, The Netherlands

### This medicinal product is authorised in the Member States of the EEA under tradename Remeron and under the following associated invented names:

Denmark, Iceland, Italy, Sweden	Remeron
France	Norset
Germany	Remergil
Ireland	Zispin
Netherlands	Remeron drank
Spain	Rexer
United Kingdom	Mirtazapine

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