

# The Imitrex Tip

Illustrated by Anthony Carter

Special thanks to "DJ" for originally sharing his Imitrex Tip for us all!

Imitrex injections are not only expensive, but it can be difficult, to say the least, to get your medical practitioner to prescribe the number of injections that you may need for the number of attacks that you may experience during your cluster or cycle. Additionally, it is recommended that an individual not exceed 12mg total of Imitrex in any 24-hour period. Given that the Imitrex STATdose system utilizes pre-filled 6mg syringes and an auto-injector, you can only abort 2 attacks within that 24-hour period safely. So, if you've had your 2 attacks today, and a third comes along within that 24-hour period, then what?

Fortunately, many people have found success in aborting their cluster headache attacks with smaller doses than that provided in the STATdose pre-filled syringes. Unfortunately, the STATdose system by its very design does not allow you to control the individual dosage of Imitrex using the supplied auto-injector pen. However, there is a way to disassemble the auto-injector and control the individual dosage so that you can abort more than those 2 attacks without exceeding the 12mg limit and even save some cash in the process.

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- 1 Remove pen. Open one of the covers on the injector cartridge.
- 2 Insert unloaded pen into the open injector cartridge.
- 3 To load the pen, twist the pen in a clockwise direction to secure the injector.
- 4 Remove loaded pen by pulling pen straight up and out of cartridge case.
- 5 Twist the injector end of the pen counter-clockwise to remove the injector.
- 6 Remove the syringe from the injector by grasping its rear lip and lifting it out. \*
- 7 Peel/remove label from the syringe so that its contents can be clearly seen.
- 8 Clean the intended injection site thoroughly with an alcohol cotton swab.
- 9 Carefully insert the needle into injection site no more than 1/2 to 3/4 the needle.
- 10 While carefully holding the syringe, insert a q-tip into rear of the syringe.
- 11 Slowly push the q-tip to move plunger and inject contents of the syringe. \*
- 12 Remove q-tip. Slowly remove syringe. Replace syringe in injector to store.

## Helpful Tips \*

- Handle the injector very carefully in step 6 as it is possible to depress the spring which will cause the needle point to protrude from the injector.
- The auto injector normally controls the depth of the needle. Try to insert the needle no more than 1/2 to 3/4 to avoid injecting muscle tissue.
- Many find that a dosage as little as 2mg will be effective in aborting an attack. Try injecting one third (1/3) of the syringe's contents (2mg).
- If the smaller dose does not seem to abort the attack, wait up to 20 minutes before repeating this process to avoid using any unnecessary medicine.

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