

TIP SHEET

Duopa Therapy: What You Need to Know



What is it?

Duopa therapy is a gel infusion of carbidopa/levodopa; it is not an oral pill. Before you can start Duopa, you need surgery to make a small hole (called a “stoma”) in your stomach wall to place a tube in your intestine. A pump then delivers Duopa directly to your intestine, slowly and consistently, through the tube. This provides a smooth absorption of the medicine and can cut down on motor fluctuations and dyskinesia.

Who is it for?

Duopa therapy is approved for use in people with advanced Parkinson’s disease who respond well to levodopa. You might be a good candidate for Duopa therapy if:

- » You experience daily motor fluctuations (changes in the ability to move) with three or more hours of “off” time, and
- » You have tried and failed to control the motor fluctuations with another class of medication, such as dopamine agonists or MAO-B inhibitors.

Things to consider

What are the side effects?

Gel carbidopa/levodopa has the same potential medication side effects as oral carbidopa/levodopa. Side effects include, but are not limited to, nausea, orthostatic hypotension (dizziness upon standing caused by a drop in blood pressure), dyskinesia, dry mouth, constipation, confusion, and hallucinations.

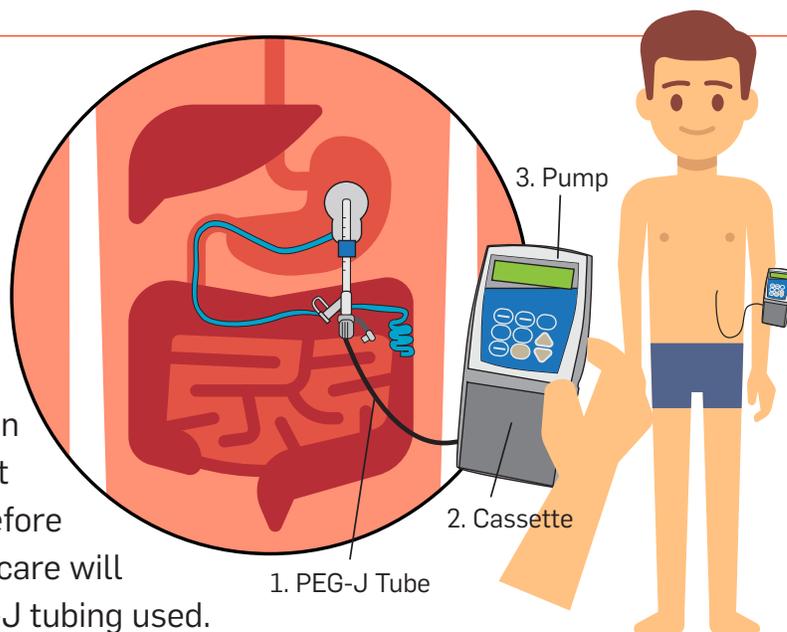
What are the risks?

Possible adverse events include nausea, depression, swelling of the legs and feet, hypertension, upper respiratory tract infection, or mouth and throat pain.

One of the main drawbacks of the pump approach is the need for a PEG-J (see next page) tube and the complications that can result from tube insertion. For example, these types of tubes can be the starting locations for infections and other complications.

There are 3 components to Duopa therapy:

1. PEG-J tube – Short for percutaneous gastrojejunostomy, this is how the medication goes directly into your intestine, where the medication is absorbed. To clean the tubing and prevent blockages, it should be flushed with a syringe before and after every pump use. Routine care will vary depending on the type of PEG-J tubing used.



2. Cassette – The cassette contains the gel carbidopa-levodopa. A new cassette must be used daily. A cassette can be used for up to 16 hours a day. Discard any leftover medication that is not used.

- » Each cassette contains 2000mg of levodopa. Some people may need two cassettes in a day.
- » Cassettes must be stored in the refrigerator. Remove a cassette 20 minutes before starting the Duopa pump to allow the medication to come to room temperature.
- » Cassettes, along with other supplies, are shipped directly from a patient-specific specialty pharmacy. Call Abbvie's case management program, DuoConnect, at 1-844-DUO-4YOU (386-4968) if you are unsure of which pharmacy to use.

3. Duopa pump – The pump is specifically programmed for your individual needs. Pump settings include:

- » Morning dose: A large amount of medication is given in the morning to get you to an ideal “on” state, before switching to a lower continuous dose for the rest of the day.
- » Continuous dose: Medication is infused continuously at the same hourly rate to help you maintain the ideal “on” state and help prevent bothersome motor fluctuations.
- » Extra dose: As-needed doses may be available to control unexpected “off” time.

Here is some information that every person interested in the pump should know:

- » The current version of the pump requires wearing an external device (see image on previous page).
- » The pump requires changing a dopamine cassette once or twice a day. The cassettes are a little smaller than a mobile phone, and usually last about 14-16 hours.
- » Some people will need additional medications during the bedtime hours.
- » The pump requires continuous maintenance and programming by a qualified professional.
- » The tube connected to the stomach requires ongoing monitoring for infection and/or inflammation.
- » The Duopa pump is not waterproof. You must disconnect the pump before bathing, swimming, etc.
- » Many people need an active caregiver to be successful with pump management. At the same time, many caregivers have reported that the pump is easier for them to manage than giving pills on time multiple times per day.
- » Duopa is sometimes discussed at the same time as deep brain stimulation (DBS). Some people choose Duopa because it is not brain surgery, while others are not a candidate for DBS (for a variety of reasons, but usually due to cognitive status). Discuss your options with your neurologist to determine which therapy is the best option for you.
- » A limiting factor for this therapy in people with dementia is that the person might pull out the tube.
- » The continuous infusion pump helps with the bradykinesia (slowness) of walking but will not address the dopamine-resistant symptoms of freezing of gait, talking and thinking.
- » The pump is helpful in treating disease symptoms, but it has not been shown to delay disease progression, and it is not a cure.

For more information on Duopa, including information on support services, visit www.duopa.com. If you would like to speak with someone using Duopa or their care partner, try Abbvie's Peer Mentor Program: www.duopamentor.com or 1-855-776-8966.

Duopa Therapy Precautions for Your Health Care Provider

Duopa therapy is an enteral gel suspension of the Parkinson's disease medication carbidopa/levodopa. The gel suspension of carbidopa/levodopa 4.63mg/20mg per mL is administered by a pump connected to the body using a percutaneous endoscopic gastrostomy with jejunal tube (PEG-J tube). PEG-J styles may vary.

Patients using Duopa therapy are assigned a case manager through Abbvie's DuoConnect. Case managers are available 24/7 at [1-844-DUO-4YOU \(386-4968\)](tel:1-844-DUO-4YOU) to answer questions, provide education and support, and help troubleshoot problems.

NOTE: Carbidopa/levodopa therapy should not be stopped abruptly. Doing so may cause a life-threatening condition called neuroleptic malignant syndrome (NMS).

- » Duopa therapy is FDA-approved for daily use of up to 16 hours.
- » If a patient is disconnected from the Duopa pump for more than 2 hours, the patient will likely need to be prescribed an oral form of carbidopa/levodopa.
- » If hospitalized or unable to use the pump for delivery of carbidopa/levodopa, consult with the patient's neurologist for instructions on how to convert the patient's enteral suspension of carbidopa/levodopa to oral tablets.
- » Do not expose the pump to therapeutic levels of ionizing radiation, ultrasound, MRI, or ECG. Call DuoConnect for instructions before initiating any imaging.
- » The Duopa pump is not waterproof. Please disconnect the pump before bathing, swimming, etc.
- » Patients using Duopa may be on a combined Parkinson's medication regimen, using another medication such as a dopamine agonist or MAO-B inhibitor.

See Abbvie's Duopa Professional portal, www.duopro.com, for prescribing information, indication, and important safety information.

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