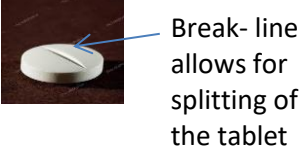
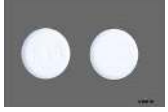


Splitting a tablet can alter its absorption and efficacy, result in medicines instability, produce local irritant effects, may result in a preparation with an unacceptable taste or produce occupational health and safety issues.

Refer to the LIMOS care home team if a medicine dose prescribed requires splitting but is not appropriate e.g. Extended Release Preparations (ERPs) or there is no score line. LIMOS will support optimisation to an alternative where possible or advise on safe dispensing / administration where needed.

**If tablet dose forms need to be split, the following guidance advises how this should be best considered.**

Some tablets are 'scored'. This means they have a break-line embedded during manufacturing to allow for tablets to be split on that break line and halved evenly.

Image of a scored tablet	Image of tablet not scored
	

The following tablet forms should not be split as they can cause undesirable effects and possible harm.

- Extended release preparations - Often have CR, ER, LA, SR, XL or XR after the product name and are designed to deliver the drug over an extended time period. Examples include Morphine Sulphate modified release tablets and Adalat LA.
- Enteric Coated Preparations - Enteric coatings are applied to tablets to delay the release of medicines that are inactivated by stomach acid, prevent the stomach from being irritated, or to delay the time the drug begins to work at a specific body site. Examples include; naproxen EC tablets.
- Sugar/film Coated Preparations- A sugar/film coating is often used to mask the taste of medicines which have a bitter taste. Examples include ferrous sulphate and clopidogrel tablets.

**Medication package in Multi Dosage Systems**

For all medication packaged in sealed blister packs the community pharmacy must split any tablet if required to dispense the correct prescribed dose into each slot i.e the whole and the half tablets placed in the slot together.

**Medication in Original Packaging**





**For scored tablets**

**Community Pharmacist**

- Send the medication in its packaging. **No need** to split the tablet for care home staff to administer.
- Label the container with standard direct instructions e.g. *'Take ONE and HALF a tablet every MORNING'*

**Care home staff;**

- Split the tablet at each administration. The remaining split tablet will need to be replaced in its original packaging and secured to ensure that it does not fall out (if not in an enclosed container).
- Any remaining split tablets should be used before splitting more. This avoids accumulation and ensures medicines are maintained in original form where possible.
- Use a commercially available tablet- splitting device, 'tablet- cutter' or 'pill-splitter'. Scissors or knives should not be used.

Do Use 	Do Not Use 
	

**For Unscored Tablets** or scored but the dose needs to be made from splitting away from the break line (e.g. where there is one break line to halve a tablet but only a quarter of the tablet is required).

**Community pharmacist;**

- Split the tablets and dispense to care home already split.
- Package split tablets in a separate container to whole tablets.
- Label each container directing to take the unit/s from that container whilst ensuring the total units making the dose is also included e.g. *'Take HALF a tablet together with one tablet every MORNING.'* Half should always be in words and not numerical (1/2) as this may be misinterpreted as meaning 1 or 2. On the container with the split tablets include ***'These tablets have already been halved for you'***.
- Put the expiry date on the container as appropriate in accordance with dispensing procedures.
- Only add the one strength to the MAR chart. **Do not** add the split tablets as a separate line on the MAR chart.

**Care Home staff;**

- Follow directions given on the label to understand how to administer the medication
- Observe any expiry dates given by the pharmacy
- Always contact the community pharmacist or LIMOS pharmacist for advice if instructions are unclear