

Amiodarone

Information for Patients

You have been given a medicine called Amiodarone.

Why has my doctor given me amiodarone?

Amiodarone is used to help the heart beat more regularly. This reduces palpitations, dizziness and blackouts which can occur if the heart beats too fast.

Check with your doctor if you are still not sure why you need amiodarone.

How does it work?

Amiodarone regulates the heart beat by affecting the rate electrical impulses pass through the heart. To build up the level of amiodarone in your body quickly you will need to take more tablets at the beginning of your treatment. After a couple of weeks you may only need to take it once daily.

How should I take my amiodarone?

Do not stop taking this medicine unless your doctor tells you to stop. Initially you may take this drug three times a day then after a week you will probably take it twice a day. After a further week you will probably take the drug just once a day. It is very important that you follow the instructions on the label. Do not drink grapefruit juice whilst taking this medication.

What should I do if I miss a dose?

Take it as soon as you remember. If it is nearly time for the next dose, do not take the one you missed. Take the next dose at the usual time. Do not double up the next dose.

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What are the side effects of amiodarone?

All drugs have side effects but most people will not experience them.

The following can occur in some people:-

- nausea / feeling sick
- loss of appetite
- dry mouth
- dizziness
- blurred vision

Very occasionally amiodarone can affect the thyroid gland, liver, lungs or eyes. Your doctor may ask you to have blood tests every three to six months to check your liver and thyroid function. Tell your doctor about any new symptoms you may have, especially weight loss, weight gain, palpitations, sickness or tenderness around the stomach, any breathing problems or problems with vision.

Direct sunlight or sunlamps may harm your skin more easily than usual. Keep your skin well covered or use a total sun block cream when you go outside.

Can I take other medicines while taking amiodarone?

Yes, but some other medicines may affect how amiodarone works. It is important that you check with your doctor or pharmacist before taking any other medicines including ones that you buy over the counter.

This leaflet is not intended as a substitute for any advice that your doctor, nurse or pharmacist may give you.

More detailed information can be obtained from the manufacturers information leaflet.

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