

What is this medicine for?

Clozapine is used to treat and prevent the return of symptoms of schizophrenia (such as hearing or seeing things which are actually not present, confused or unreal thoughts, or uncontrolled anger).

This medicine may also be used for other conditions, check with your doctor.

Before using this medicine:

- Tell your doctor if you have or have ever had blood disorders; heart, kidney, or liver disease; seizures (fits); problems with your urinary system or prostate; gastrointestinal problems, glaucoma, irregular heartbeat; diabetes, problems with your blood pressure; or blood problems caused by clozapine.

FOR WOMEN: Tell your doctor if you are pregnant, plan to become pregnant, or are breast-feeding.

How to use this medicine?

Follow the directions on your medicine label and take the medicine exactly as directed. Do not take more or less of it or take it more often than prescribed by your doctor.

The amount of medicine you take will be adjusted slowly to the desired dosage. Clozapine must be taken regularly for a few weeks before its full effect is felt.

Continue to take the medicine even if you feel well. Do not stop taking it without telling your doctor, especially if you have taken large doses for a long time, otherwise your condition may worsen very quickly.

Precautions while taking this medicine:

- Clozapine may make you drowsy. Do not drive or operate machinery if affected. Alcohol and some medications that cause drowsiness (such as cold

medicines containing antihistamines) can worsen the drowsiness caused by clozapine.

- Clozapine may cause low blood pressure and/or dizziness when you stand up, especially when you first start taking it. Getting up slowly from sitting or lying down position may help to lessen the dizziness.
- Clozapine may cause seizures (fits). Tell your doctor if you have or have ever had seizures. If affected, do not drive, operate machinery or engage in any activities that require alertness because if you suddenly lose consciousness you could harm yourself or others.
- Smoking may decrease the amount of clozapine that stays in your body.
- Clozapine may increase your blood glucose (even if you do not already have diabetes), or worsen your blood glucose control in diabetes. Maintain regular check-ups with your doctor. Tell your doctor if you have any of the following symptoms while you are taking clozapine: extreme thirst, frequent urination, extreme hunger, blurred vision, or weakness.
- When you take clozapine with some other medicines, it may change the way how clozapine or the other medicines work. Be sure that you tell all doctors, pharmacists, dentists and other healthcare providers who treat you about all medicines and natural remedies you are taking.

IMPORTANT WARNING:

- Clozapine can cause a serious blood condition called **agranulocytosis** (a decrease in white blood cells). This condition can be fatal if nothing is done about it. However, with regular blood tests, it can be detected early and if the medicine is stopped as soon as possible, the blood condition will most likely return to normal.

Note: If agranulocytosis does occur, you must not take clozapine again.

- Keep all appointments with your doctor and the laboratory. Your doctor will order certain blood tests before starting your treatment, weekly for the first 18 weeks, and at least monthly thereafter. The blood tests are extremely important in determining whether you should continue taking the medicine and to check your response to clozapine. Taking this medicine without regular blood tests can be very dangerous.

What should I do if I forget a dose?

Take the missed dose as soon as you remember it. However, if it is more than half way between the doses, skip the missed dose and take your medicine at the usual time. **Do not take two doses at the same time to make up for a missed one.**

If for any reason you stop taking clozapine for more than 2 days, do not start back on the same dose. Ask your doctor what dose you should take.

Possible Side Effects

Like all medications, this medication may also cause some POSSIBLE side effects in some people. Everyone responds differently to medications; so not everyone experiences any or all of them.

COMMON (Generally affect up to 10% of patients)

Most of these side effects below will get better or go away completely with continued medication taking as your body gets used to this medication. Contact your doctor or pharmacist should they become too bothersome to you.

- ~ Dizziness or light-headedness
- ~ Drowsiness
- ~ Excess saliva production or drooling
- ~ Constipation
- ~ Weight gain (exercise regularly and avoid excessive intake of high fat food)
- ~ Nausea
- ~ Restlessness

FOR URGENT ATTENTION

Check with your doctor as soon as possible if you have any of the following:

- ~ Fainting
- ~ Fast, irregular or pounding heartbeat, chest pain
- ~ Fever or sore throat
- ~ Seizures (fits)
- ~ Shortness of breath,

If you have any concerns about your medications or if you have other side effects that you think are caused by this medicine, please consult with your doctor or pharmacist.

Where should I store the medicine?

Store this medication at room temperature, away from direct light, heat and moisture (not in the bathroom) and out of reach of children.

Throw away any medication that is expired or no longer needed.

Do not share the medication with other people.

Ask your doctor or pharmacist for more information or if you have any questions.

Institute of Mental Health

Pharmacy Department

10 Buangkok View
Singapore 539747

For medication enquiries: (during office hours)

IMH Clinic B/ Sayang Wellness Pharmacy: 63892077

IMH Clinic C (NAMS) Pharmacy: 63893666

Community Wellness Centre Pharmacy: 64715797

Geylang Behavioural Medicine Pharmacy: 67461724

Child Guidance Clinic (HPB) Pharmacy: 64353807

Child Guidance (Sunrise Wing) Pharmacy: 63892410

Email: enquiry@imh.com.sg



Patient Information Leaflet on

CLOZAPINE