

What is this medicine for?

Antipsychotics are used to treat and prevent the return of symptoms of psychosis such as hearing or seeing things which are actually not present, confused or unreal thoughts, or uncontrolled anger.

A depot antipsychotic is a special preparation of the medication which is given in the form of an injection into the upper arm, thigh or buttock. The medication is then slowly released and absorbed to the rest of the body over a number of weeks.

Some depot antipsychotics may also be used for other conditions, please check with your doctor.

Before using this medicine:

Tell your doctor if you have or have ever had heart, liver or severe lung disease; Parkinson's disease; seizures (fits); thyroid problems; urinary or prostate problems (in males); glaucoma; irregular heartbeat; blood pressure problems; blood disorders; jaundice (yellowing of the skin and whites of the eyes).

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

How is this medicine started and given?

The first time you are started on this treatment, you will usually be given a small test dose of the medication (known as test dose) to help avoid any severe prolonged adverse effects.

If you have no side effects from the medication, you may be given with an additional dose (known as top up dose) in a few days' to a week's time before you receive your regular injections subsequently.

The interval between each injection will be decided by your doctor (e.g. every 2 - 4 weeks)

For the injection to work, it is usually injected into the muscles at the upper arm or buttocks, where there will be less (or no) pain and swelling.

Precautions while taking this medicine:

- This medicine may make you drowsy or less alert. Do not drive or operate machinery if affected. Avoid alcohol as it can add to the drowsiness.
- This medicine can make your skin more sensitive to sunlight. Avoid prolonged sun exposure, wear protective clothing or use sunscreen if necessary.
- This medicine may make you sweat less, causing your body temperature to increase. Use extra care not to become overheated during strenuous exercise or hot weather.
- When you take this medicine with some other medicines, it may affect how they work. Be sure that you tell all doctors, pharmacists, dentists and other health care providers who treat you about all medicines and natural remedies you are taking.

What should I do if I missed an injection?

If you missed an injection, you should arrange to have one as soon as you can.

If you missed the injection for a prolonged period of time of several weeks or months, the medicine will stop working and some of your previous symptoms (eg. hearing voices, feeling troubled or scared) will return. You may start to feel worse than before you started the medicine if you keep missing the depot injections. Thus, it is important to turn up for your scheduled doctor's appointments for your depot injections.

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.

- ~ Pain at site of injection
- ~ Drowsiness
- ~ Dizziness (particularly when standing up)
- ~ Tremor or shaking
- ~ Dry mouth
- ~ Constipation
- ~ Changes in menstrual cycle (in females)
- ~ Increased salivation or drooling
- ~ Feeling of restlessness and anxiety
- ~ Stiffness in the arms, legs, neck or mouth
- ~ Weight gain
- ~ "Eye rolling up" effect

FOR URGENT ATTENTION

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

- ~ Allergic reactions: skin rash or itching, difficulty in breathing, swelling in the face, lips or other parts of the body or chest pain
- ~ Severe muscle stiffness
- ~ Muscle spasms (such as in the neck, back or eyelids)
- ~ Twitching or uncontrollable movements (such as in the face, tongue or jaw)
- ~ High fever
- ~ Confusion
- ~ Restlessness or the need to keep moving constantly
- ~ Difficulty in speaking or swallowing
- ~ Fast or irregular heartbeat
- ~ Seizures (fits)
- ~ Problems with eyesight or blurred vision

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.

Institute of Mental Health

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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 **Depot Antipsychotic Injections:**

FLUPENTHIXOL

FLUPHENAZINE

HALOPERIDOL

PIPOTHIAZINE

ZUCLOPENTHIXOL