Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center

PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Amiloride and Hydrochlorothiazide

This information from Lexicomp® explains what you need to know about this medication, including what it's used for, how to take it, its side effects, and when to call your healthcare provider.

Brand Names: Canada

AA-Amilzide; Novamilor [DSC]

Warning

- Sometimes, this drug may raise potassium levels in the blood. This can be deadly if it is not treated. The risk is highest in people with diabetes, kidney disease, severe illness, and in older adults. Your doctor will follow you closely to change the dose if needed.

What is this drug used for?

- It is used to treat high blood pressure.
- It is used to treat heart failure (weak heart).
- It is used to raise potassium in the body.
- It may be given to you for other reasons. Talk with the doctor.

What do I need to tell my doctor BEFORE I take this drug?

- If you are allergic to this drug; any part of this drug; or any other drugs, foods, or substances. Tell your doctor about the allergy and what signs you had.
- If you have a sulfa allergy.
- If you have any of these health problems: Diabetes, high potassium levels, kidney disease, or trouble passing urine.
- If you are not able to pass urine.
- If you are on a potassium-rich diet or if you are taking any of these drugs: Spironolactone, triamterene, or potassium-containing drugs or salt substitutes.
- If you are taking dofetilide.
- If you are taking lithium.

This is not a list of all drugs or health problems that

interact with this drug.

Tell your doctor and pharmacist about all of your drugs (prescription or OTC, natural products, vitamins) and health problems. You must check to make sure that it is safe for you to take this drug with all of your drugs and health problems. Do not start, stop, or change the dose of any drug without checking with your doctor.

What are some things I need to know or do while I take this drug?

- Tell all of your health care providers that you take this drug. This includes your doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and dentists.
- Avoid driving and doing other tasks or actions that call for you to be alert until you see how this drug affects you.
- To lower the chance of feeling dizzy or passing out, rise slowly if you have been sitting or lying down. Be careful going up and down stairs.
- If you have high blood sugar (diabetes), you will need to watch your blood sugar closely.
- Check your blood pressure as you have been told.
- Have blood work checked as you have been told by the doctor. Talk with the doctor.

- This drug may affect certain lab tests. Tell all of your health care providers and lab workers that you take this drug.
- If you are taking this drug and have high blood pressure, talk with your doctor before using OTC products that may raise blood pressure. These include cough or cold drugs, diet pills, stimulants, non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) like ibuprofen or naproxen, and some natural products or aids.
- This drug may make you sunburn more easily. Use care if you will be in the sun. Tell your doctor if you sunburn easily while taking this drug.
- Talk with your doctor before you use alcohol, marijuana or other forms of cannabis, or prescription or OTC drugs that may slow your actions.
- Tell your doctor if you have too much sweat, fluid loss, throwing up, or loose stools. This may lead to low blood pressure.
- If you are on a low-salt or salt-free diet, talk with your doctor.
- If you take cholestyramine or colestipol, talk with your pharmacist about how to take them with this drug.
- Watch for gout attacks.

- If you have lupus, this drug can make your lupus active or get worse. Tell your doctor right away if you get any new or worse signs.
- This drug may cause high cholesterol and triglyceride levels. Talk with the doctor.
- If you are 65 or older, use this drug with care. You could have more side effects.
- Tell your doctor if you are pregnant, plan on getting pregnant, or are breast-feeding. You will need to talk about the benefits and risks to you and the baby.

What are some side effects that I need to call my doctor about right away?

WARNING/CAUTION: Even though it may be rare, some people may have very bad and sometimes deadly side effects when taking a drug. Tell your doctor or get medical help right away if you have any of the following signs or symptoms that may be related to a very bad side effect:

- Signs of an allergic reaction, like rash; hives; itching; red, swollen, blistered, or peeling skin with or without fever; wheezing; tightness in the chest or throat; trouble breathing, swallowing, or talking; unusual hoarseness; or swelling of the mouth, face, lips, tongue, or throat.

- Signs of high blood sugar like confusion, feeling sleepy, unusual thirst or hunger, passing urine more often, flushing, fast breathing, or breath that smells like fruit.
- Signs of fluid and electrolyte problems like mood changes, confusion, muscle pain or weakness, fast or abnormal heartbeat, severe dizziness or passing out, increased thirst, seizures, feeling very tired or weak, decreased appetite, unable to pass urine or change in the amount of urine produced, dry mouth, dry eyes, or severe upset stomach or throwing up.
- Signs of too much acid in the blood (acidosis) like confusion; fast breathing; fast heartbeat; a heartbeat that does not feel normal; very bad stomach pain, upset stomach, or throwing up; feeling very sleepy; shortness of breath; or feeling very tired or weak.
- Signs of kidney problems like unable to pass urine, change in how much urine is passed, blood in the urine, or a big weight gain.
- This drug can cause certain eye problems. If left untreated, this can lead to lasting eyesight loss. If eye problems happen, signs like change in eyesight or eye pain most often happen within hours to weeks of starting this drug. Call your doctor right away if you have these signs.

- Rarely, certain types of skin cancer have happened in people taking hydrochlorothiazide. Protect your skin from the sun, and have your skin checked as you have been told by your doctor. Call your doctor right away if you have a change in color or size of a mole, or any new or changing skin lump or growth.

What are some other side effects of this drug?

All drugs may cause side effects. However, many people have no side effects or only have minor side effects. Call your doctor or get medical help if any of these side effects or any other side effects bother you or do not go away:

- Feeling dizzy, tired, or weak.
- Headache.
- Decreased appetite.
- Upset stomach.
- Stomach pain.
- Gas.

These are not all of the side effects that may occur. If you have questions about side effects, call your doctor. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects.

You may report side effects to your national health

agency.

You may report side effects to the FDA at 1-800-332-1088. You may also report side effects at https://www.fda.gov/medwatch.

How is this drug best taken?

Use this drug as ordered by your doctor. Read all information given to you. Follow all instructions closely.

- Take this drug with food.
- Keep taking this drug as you have been told by your doctor or other health care provider, even if you feel well.
- This drug may cause you to pass urine more often. To keep from having sleep problems, try not to take too close to bedtime.

What do I do if I miss a dose?

- Take a missed dose as soon as you think about it.
- If it is close to the time for your next dose, skip the missed dose and go back to your normal time.
- Do not take 2 doses at the same time or extra doses.

How do I store and/or throw out this drug?

- Store at room temperature protected from light. Store in a dry place. Do not store in a bathroom.
- Keep all drugs in a safe place. Keep all drugs out of the reach of children and pets.
- Throw away unused or expired drugs. Do not flush down a toilet or pour down a drain unless you are told to do so. Check with your pharmacist if you have questions about the best way to throw out drugs. There may be drug take-back programs in your area.

General drug facts

- If your symptoms or health problems do not get better or if they become worse, call your doctor.
- Do not share your drugs with others and do not take anyone else’s drugs.
- Some drugs may have another patient information leaflet. If you have any questions about this drug, please talk with your doctor, nurse, pharmacist, or other health care provider.
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provider.

- If you think there has been an overdose, call your poison control center or get medical care right away. Be ready to tell or show what was taken, how much, and when it happened.

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If you have any questions, contact a member of your care team directly. If you're a patient at MSK and you need to reach a provider after 5 p.m., during the weekend, or on a holiday, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit www.mskcc.org/pe to search our virtual library.

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