



## PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

# Clonidine

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: US**

Catapres; Catapres-TTS-1; Catapres-TTS-2; Catapres-TTS-3; Duraclon; Kapvay

### **Brand Names: Canada**

Catapres; Dixarit

### **Warning**

#### **Epidural:**

- This drug is not for use to ease pain before, during, or after surgery. Most of the time, this drug is not for use while giving birth or after giving birth. Low blood pressure and slow heartbeat from this drug may cause problems in these people. Talk with the doctor.

### **What is this drug used for?**

- It is used to treat high blood pressure.
- It is used to treat attention deficit problems with

hyperactivity.

- It is used to control pain when infused into the spine.
- 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?**

### **All products:**

- If you have an allergy to clonidine or any other part of this drug.
- If you are allergic to any drugs like this one, any other drugs, foods, or other substances. Tell your doctor about the allergy and what signs you had, like rash; hives; itching; shortness of breath; wheezing; cough; swelling of face, lips, tongue, or throat; or any other signs.
- If you are taking another drug that has the same drug in it.
- If you are taking any of these drugs: Digoxin, diltiazem, verapamil, or a beta blocker like metoprolol or propranolol.

### **Epidural:**

- If you have bleeding problems.
- If you have an infection where the shot will be given.
- If you are taking a blood thinner.

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?**

### **All products:**

- 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.
- Check blood pressure and heart rate as the doctor has told you. Talk with the doctor.
- 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, ibuprofen or like products, and some natural products or aids.
- Be careful in hot weather or while being active. Drink lots of

fluids to stop fluid loss.

- 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.

### **Extended-release tablets:**

- Avoid alcohol or other drugs and natural products that slow your actions.

### **All other products:**

- Talk with your doctor before you drink alcohol or use other drugs and natural products that slow your actions.

### **All oral products:**

- Talk with your doctor to find out what to do if you throw up after taking a dose of this drug.

### **Skin patch:**

- The patch may have metal. Take off the patch before an MRI.
- If you will be having certain procedures to help your heart beat normally (defibrillation cardioversion), talk with your doctor. Be sure your doctor knows you take this drug.

### **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:

### **All products:**

- 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.
- Very bad dizziness or passing out.
- Fast or slow heartbeat.
- A heartbeat that does not feel normal.
- Change in how contact lenses feel in the eyes.

### **Skin patch:**

- Very bad skin irritation.
- Redness.
- Burning.
- Change in color of skin.

### **Epidural:**

- Trouble breathing, slow breathing, or shallow breathing.
- Feeling confused.

### **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:

#### **All products:**

- Dry mouth.
- Constipation.
- Dizziness.
- Feeling sleepy.
- Headache.
- Upset stomach.
- Feeling tired or weak.

#### **Extended-release tablets:**

- Trouble sleeping.
- Bad dreams.
- Not hungry.
- Stomach pain.
- Feeling irritable.

## **Skin patch:**

- Skin irritation.

## **Epidural:**

- Sweating a lot.
- Throwing up.
- Ringing in ears.

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.

## **How is this drug best taken?**

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

## **All oral products and skin patch:**

- To gain the most benefit, do not miss doses.
- Keep taking this drug as you have been told by your doctor or other health care provider, even if you feel well.
- Do not stop taking this drug all of a sudden without calling your doctor. You may have a greater risk of side effects. If you need to stop this drug, you will want to slowly stop it as ordered by your doctor.
- Do not switch between different forms of this drug without

first talking with the doctor.

### **All oral products:**

- Take with or without food.
- Take this drug at the same time of day.

### **Extended-release tablets:**

- Swallow whole. Do not chew, break, or crush.
- If you have trouble swallowing, talk with your doctor.

### **Skin patch:**

- Take off old patch first.
- Wash your hands before and after use.
- Put patch on clean, dry, healthy skin on the chest or upper arm. Move the site with each new patch.
- Put patch on a site without hair.
- Do not put on skin that is irritated or damaged. Do not put on an area with skin folds or skin that will be rubbed by tight clothes.
- This drug comes with a patch cover to hold the patch in place if it comes loose. The patch cover does not have any drug in it. Do not use it by itself. If the patch comes loose, put the patch cover over the patch as you have been told.
- After you take off a skin patch, be sure to fold the sticky sides of the patch to each other. Throw away used patches



where children and pets cannot get to them.

### **Epidural:**

- It is given into the spine.
- This drug will be given to you by a doctor.

### **What do I do if I miss a dose?**

#### **Extended-release tablets:**

- Skip the missed dose and go back to your normal time.
- Do not take 2 doses at the same time or extra doses.

#### **All other oral products:**

- 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.

#### **Skin patch:**

- Put on a missed patch as soon as you think about it after taking off the old one.
- If it is close to the time for your next patch, place the new patch on.
- Start a new timetable after the patch is put back on.
- Do not put on 2 doses at the same time or extra doses.

### **Epidural:**

- Call your doctor to find out what to do.

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

### **All oral products and skin patch:**

- Store at room temperature.
- Store in a dry place. Do not store in a bathroom.

### **All oral products:**

- Keep lid tightly closed.

### **Epidural:**

- If you need to store this drug at home, talk with your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist about how to store it.

### **All products:**

- 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.
- Keep a list of all your drugs (prescription, natural products, vitamins, OTC) with you. Give this list to your doctor.
- Talk with the doctor before starting any new drug, including prescription or OTC, natural products, or vitamins.
- 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.
- 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.

## **Consumer Information Use and Disclaimer**

This information should not be used to decide whether or not to take this medicine or any other medicine. Only the healthcare provider has the knowledge and training to decide which medicines are right for a specific patient. This information does not endorse any medicine as safe, effective, or approved for treating any patient or health condition. This is only a brief summary of general information about this medicine. It does NOT include all information about the possible uses, directions, warnings, precautions, interactions, adverse effects, or risks that may apply to this medicine. This information is not specific medical advice and does not replace information you receive from the healthcare provider. You

must talk with the healthcare provider for complete information about the risks and benefits of using this medicine.

## **Last Reviewed Date**

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If you have any questions, contact a member of your healthcare team directly. If you're a patient at MSK and you need to reach a provider after 5:00 PM, during the weekend, or on a holiday, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit [www.mskcc.org/pe](http://www.mskcc.org/pe) to search our virtual library.

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