Irbesartan

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
Avapro

Brand Names: Canada
Avapro

Warning

- Do not take if you are pregnant. Use during pregnancy may cause birth defects or loss of the unborn baby. If you get pregnant or plan on getting pregnant while taking this drug, call your doctor right away.

What is this drug used for?

- It is used to treat high blood pressure.
- It is used to protect kidney function in diabetic patients who have protein loss.
- 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 have an allergy to irbesartan 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 a drug that has aliskiren in it and you also have high blood sugar (diabetes) or kidney problems. Check with your doctor or pharmacist if you are not sure if a drug you take has aliskiren in it.

- If you are breast-feeding or plan to breast-feed.

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.

- Have your blood pressure checked often. Talk with your doctor.

- Have blood work checked as you have been told by the doctor. Talk with the doctor.

- If you are taking a salt substitute that has potassium in it, a potassium-sparing diuretic, or a potassium product, talk with your doctor.

- If you are on a low-salt or salt-free diet, talk with your doctor.

- If you are taking lithium, talk with your doctor. You may need to have your blood work checked more closely while you are taking it with 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, ibuprofen or like
products, and some natural products or aids.

- Talk with your doctor before you drink alcohol.
- Be careful in hot weather or while being active. Drink lots of fluids to stop fluid loss.
- Tell your doctor if you have too much sweat, fluid loss, throwing up, or loose stools. This may lead to low blood pressure.
- This drug may not work as well in black patients. Talk with the doctor.

**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 kidney problems like unable to pass urine, change in how much urine is passed, blood in the urine, or a big weight gain.
- Signs of a high potassium level like a heartbeat that does not feel normal; change in thinking clearly and with logic; feeling weak, lightheaded, or dizzy; feel like passing out; numbness or tingling; or shortness of breath.
- Very bad dizziness or passing out.

**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:

- Dizziness.

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.

- Take with or without food.
- Take this drug at the same time of day.
- Keep taking this drug as you have been told by your doctor or other healthcare provider, even if you feel well.
- To gain the most benefit, do not miss doses.
- Drink lots of noncaffeine liquids unless told to drink less liquid by your doctor.

**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.
- 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.

• 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.

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