Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center

PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Clonidine

This information from UpToDate® Lexidrug™ 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-TTS-1; Catapres-TTS-2; Catapres-TTS-3; Duraclon; Javadin; Kapvay [DSC]; Nexiclon XR; Onyda XR

Brand Names: Canada

JAMP-Clonidine; MAR-Clonidine; MINT-CloNIDine; MINT-Clonidine; Sandoz Clonidine; TEVA-CloNIDine

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 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 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.
- 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.
- Be careful in hot weather or while being active. Drink lots of fluids to stop fluid loss.
- Dry eyes may happen with this drug. If you wear contact lenses and have dry eyes or a change in how the contact lenses feel in your eyes, talk with your doctor.
- If you have used a patch form of this drug and have had skin irritation, talk with your doctor. You may be more likely to have a rash across other parts of the body with any form of this drug.
- 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 (ADHD) and oral solution:

- Avoid alcohol, marijuana or other forms of cannabis, or prescription or OTC drugs that may slow your actions.

All other products:

- Talk with your doctor before you use alcohol, marijuana or other forms of cannabis, or prescription or OTC drugs that may slow your actions.

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.
- Severe dizziness or passing out.
- Fast, slow, or abnormal heartbeat.

Skin patch:

- 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.
- Feeling dizzy, sleepy, tired, or weak.
- Headache.
- Upset stomach.

Extended-release tablets:

- Trouble sleeping.
- Bad dreams.
- Decreased appetite.
- 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.

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.

All oral products:

- 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 health care provider, even if you feel well.
- Do not stop this drug all of a sudden without first talking with the doctor. High blood pressure can happen if this drug is stopped all of a sudden. Signs of withdrawal like headache, fast heartbeat, upset stomach, flushing or warm feeling, passing out, tightness in the chest, nervousness, or anxiety can also happen. If this drug needs to be stopped, you will want to slowly stop it as ordered by the doctor.
- Tell your doctor if you have been throwing up and cannot take this drug.

Extended-release tablets (ADHD):

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

Extended-release tablets (blood pressure):

- You may break the tablet in half. Do not chew or crush.

Oral solution:

- Measure liquid doses carefully. Use the measuring device that comes with this drug. If there is none, ask the pharmacist for a device to measure this drug.
- If you will be having surgery, talk to the doctor about how to take this drug on the day of your surgery.

Skin patch:

- Keep using this drug as you have been told by your doctor or other health care provider, even if you feel well.
- Take off old patch first.
- Wash your hands before and after use.
- Do not cut or divide patches. Do not use patches that are damaged.
- Put patch on healthy skin on the chest or upper arm. Clean the site with soap and water and dry well before putting patch on. Move the site with each new patch.
- Put patch on skin without hair. Do not put on skin that has just been shaved.
- Do not put on skin where you have just used oils, lotions, moisturizers, or other skin products. The patch may not stick as well.
- 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.
- You may bathe, shower, or swim while wearing the patch.
- 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.
- If the skin under the patch becomes mildly irritated, you may remove the patch and put on a new one in a different place.
- 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.

- This drug may cause harm to a child if accidentally chewed, swallowed, or put on. Get medical help right away if this happens.
- Do not stop this drug all of a sudden without first talking with the doctor. High blood pressure can happen if this drug is stopped all of a sudden. Signs of withdrawal like headache, fast heartbeat, upset stomach, flushing or warm feeling, passing out, tightness in the chest, nervousness, or anxiety can also happen. If this drug needs to be stopped, you will want to slowly stop it as ordered by the doctor.

Epidural:

- It is given into the spine.

What do I do if I miss a dose?

Extended-release tablets (ADHD):

- 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 in a dry place. Do not store in a bathroom.

All oral products:

- Keep lid tightly closed.

Oral solution:

- After opening, throw away any part not used after 60 days.

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.
- 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.

- Some drugs may have another patient information leaflet. Check with your pharmacist. 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 generalized information is a limited summary of diagnosis, treatment, and/or medication information. It is not meant to be comprehensive and should be used as a tool to help the user understand and/or assess potential diagnostic and treatment options. It does NOT include all information about conditions, treatments, medications, side effects, or risks that may apply to a specific patient. It is not intended to be medical advice or a substitute for the medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment of a health care provider based on the health care provider's examination and assessment of a patient's specific and unique circumstances. Patients must speak with a health care provider for complete information about their health, medical questions, and treatment options, including any risks or benefits regarding use of medications. This information does not endorse any treatments or medications as safe, effective, or approved for treating a specific patient. UpToDate, Inc. and its affiliates disclaim any warranty or liability relating to this information or the use thereof. The use of this information is governed by the Terms of Use, available at https://www.wolterskluwer.com/en/know/clinical-effectiveness-terms.

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If you have questions or concerns, contact your healthcare provider. A member of your care team will answer Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Outside those hours, you can leave a message or talk with another MSK provider. There is always a doctor or nurse on call. If you're not sure how to reach your healthcare provider, call 212-639-2000.

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

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