Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center

PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Atropine (Systemic

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

AtroPen [DSC]

What is this drug used for?

- It is used to treat some poisonings.
- In surgery, it is used to lower secretions such as saliva.
- It is used to treat muscle spasms of the GI (gastrointestinal) tract, gallbladder system, or urinary system.
- It is used when the heart is not beating.

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.

This drug may interact with other drugs or health problems.

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.
- Be careful in hot weather or while being active. Drink lots of fluids to stop fluid loss.
- This drug may cause harm if swallowed. If this drug is swallowed, call a doctor or poison control center right

away.

- If you are 65 or older, use this drug with care. You could have more side effects.
- If the patient is a child, use this drug with care. The risk of some side effects may be higher in children.
- 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.

Multi-dose container:

- Some products have benzyl alcohol. If possible, avoid products with benzyl alcohol in newborns or infants. Serious side effects can happen in these children with some doses of benzyl alcohol, including if given with other drugs that have benzyl alcohol. Talk with the doctor to see if this product has benzyl alcohol in it.

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.
- Trouble passing urine.
- Chest pain or pressure, a fast heartbeat, or an abnormal heartbeat.
- Very bad dizziness or passing out.
- Trouble breathing, slow breathing, or shallow breathing.
- Feeling confused.
- Change in balance.
- Hallucinations (seeing or hearing things that are not there).
- Feeling very tired or weak.
- Restlessness.
- Shakiness.
- Swelling of belly.
- Severe constipation or stomach pain. These may be signs of a severe bowel problem.

- Not able to get or keep an erection.
- Lowered interest in sex.
- Depression.
- Change in eyesight, eye pain, or severe eye irritation.
- Not sweating during activities or in warm temperatures.

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:

- Blurred eyesight.
- If bright lights bother your eyes.
- Constipation.
- Stomach pain.
- Upset stomach or throwing up.
- Less sweating.
- Dizziness or headache.
- Dry mouth.
- Dry eyes.

- Dry nose.
- Larger pupils.
- Flushing.
- Pain where the shot was given.

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.

Auto-injector shot:

- It is given as a shot into a muscle.
- Be sure you know how to use before an emergency happens. Read the package insert and instructions for use that come with this drug. If you have any questions about how to use this drug, talk with the doctor or pharmacist.

- Someone else may have to give this drug. Be sure others know where this drug is stored and how to give it if needed.
- Never put your fingers or hand over the tip.
- Check the device before you need to use it to make sure the safety release is in place and that the device can be removed from the case. Do not take off the safety release until ready to use.
- When you are ready to use, take the pen out of the case.
- Hold pen with tip down.
- Make a fist around the pen.
- Pull off safety release. Throw away the safety release right after using this drug. There may be a risk of choking if the safety release is accidentally swallowed by a child or pet.
- Jab straight into the outer thigh as you have been told. This drug may be given through clothes if needed. Inject and hold for as long as you were told.
- Get medical help right away after using this drug.
- Take it with you to the hospital.
- Do not use this drug if the solution changes color, is cloudy, or has particles. Get a new one.

All other injection products:

- It is given as a shot into a muscle, under the skin, or into a vein.

What do I do if I miss a dose?
Auto-injector shot:

- Get medical help right away.

All other injection products:

- Call your doctor to find out what to do.

How do I store and/or throw out this drug?
Auto-injector shot:

- Store at room temperature. Do not freeze.
- Protect from light.

All other injection products:

- 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.

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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 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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