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 your child for other reasons. Talk with the doctor.

### Oral solution:

- If your child has been given this form of this drug, talk with the doctor for information about the benefits and risks. Talk with the doctor if you have questions or concerns about giving this drug to your child.

## What do I need to tell the doctor BEFORE my child takes this drug?

### All products:

- If your child is allergic to this drug; any part of this drug; or any other drugs, foods, or substances. Tell the doctor about the allergy and what signs your child had.
- If your child is taking another drug that has the same drug in it.
- If your child is taking any of these drugs: Digoxin, diltiazem, verapamil, or a beta blocker like metoprolol or propranolol.

### Epidural:

- If your child has bleeding problems.
- If your child has an infection where the shot will be given.
- If your child is taking a blood thinner.

This is not a list of all drugs or health problems that interact with this drug.

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

## What are some things I need to know or do while my child takes this drug?

### All products:

- Tell all of your child's health care providers that your child is taking this drug. This includes your child's doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and dentists.
- Have your child avoid tasks or actions that call for alertness until you see how this drug affects your child. These are things like riding a bike, playing sports, or using items such as scissors, lawnmowers, electric scooters, toy cars, or motorized vehicles.
- Check blood pressure and heart rate as the doctor has told you.
- To lower the chance of feeling dizzy or passing out, have your child rise slowly if your child has been sitting or lying down. Have your child be careful going up and down stairs.
- Alcohol may interact with this drug. Be sure your child does not drink alcohol.
- If your child is taking this drug and has high blood pressure, talk with the doctor before giving 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.
- Have your child be careful in hot weather or while your child is being active. Have your child drink lots of fluids to stop fluid loss.
- Dry eyes may happen with this drug. If your child wears contact lenses and has dry eyes or a change in how contact lenses feel in the eyes, talk with the doctor.
- If your child has used a patch form of this drug and has had skin irritation, talk with the doctor. Your child may be more likely to have a rash across other parts of the body with any form of this drug.

### If your child is pregnant or breast-feeding a baby:

- Talk with the doctor if your child is pregnant, becomes pregnant, or is breast-feeding a baby. You will need to talk about the benefits and risks to your child and the baby.

### Extended-release tablets (ADHD) and suspension:

- Avoid giving your child marijuana or other forms of cannabis, or prescription or OTC drugs that may slow your child's actions.

### All other products:

- Talk with your child's doctor before your child uses marijuana, other forms of cannabis, or prescription or OTC drugs that may slow your child's actions.

### Skin patch:

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

## What are some side effects that I need to call my child's 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 child's doctor or get medical help right away if your child has 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 child's doctor or get medical help if any of these side effects or any other side effects bother your child or do not go away:

### All products:

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

### Extended-release tablets and suspension:

- 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 child's doctor. Call your child's doctor for medical advice about side effects.

You may report side effects to your national health agency.

## How is this drug best given?

Give this drug as ordered by your child's doctor. Read all information given to you. Follow all instructions closely.

### All oral products:

- Give this drug with or without food.
- Give this drug at the same time of day.
- Keep giving this drug to your child as you have been told by your child's doctor or other health care provider, even if your child feels 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 the doctor if your child has been throwing up and cannot take this drug.

## Extended-release tablets (ADHD):

- Have your child swallow whole. Do not let your child chew, break, or crush.
- If your child has trouble swallowing, talk with the doctor.

## Liquid (suspension):

- If the adapter has not been put in the bottle when you get it, follow how to prepare the bottle as you have been told or read the package insert.
- Shake gently before use.
- 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.
- Rinse the measuring device with water after each use.

## Skin patch:

- Keep giving this drug to your child as you have been told by your child's doctor or other health care provider, even if your child feels 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.
- Your child 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 my child misses a dose?

### Extended-release tablets (ADHD) and suspension:

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

### All other oral products:

- Give a missed dose as soon as you think about it.
- If it is close to the time for your child's next dose, skip the missed dose and go back to your child's normal time.
- Do not put on 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 child's next dose, skip the missed dose and go back to your child's normal time.
- 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 child's 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.

### Liquid (suspension):

- Protect from light.
- 30 mL and 60 mL bottles: After opening, throw away any part not used after 30 days.
- 120 mL bottle: After opening, throw away any part not used after 60 days.

### Epidural:

- If you need to store this drug at home, talk with your child's 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 child's symptoms or health problems do not get better or if they become worse, call your child's doctor.
- Do not share your child's drug with others and do not give anyone else's drug to your child.
- Some drugs may have another patient information leaflet. If you have any questions about this drug, please talk with your child's 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

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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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