PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Guanfacine

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

Intuniv

Brand Names: Canada

AG-Guanfacine XR; APO-Guanfacine XR; Intuniv XR; JAMP-Guanfacine XR; PRO-Guanfacine XR; SANDOZ Guanfacine XR

What is this drug used for?

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

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

- 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.

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.
- 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's blood pressure and heart rate checked often.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- Tell the doctor if your child sweats more than usual, has fluid loss, is throwing up, or has diarrhea. This may lead to low blood pressure.
- 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.
- Do not stop giving this drug to your child all of a sudden without calling the doctor. High blood pressure and fast heartbeat can happen if this drug is stopped all of a sudden. Other signs of withdrawal like headache, shakiness,

or feeling agitated, confused, or nervous can also happen. If these get worse and are not treated, it could lead to a very bad health problem with signs like feeling very sleepy or tired, very bad headache, throwing up, change in eyesight, or seizures. If your child needs to stop this drug, you will want to slowly stop it as told by the doctor.

- Tell the doctor if your child has been throwing up and cannot take this drug.
- If the doctor has told you to lower your child's dose or slowly stop giving this drug, you will need to check your child's blood pressure and heart rate closely. Follow what the doctor has told you to do.
- This drug may not be for use in children of all ages. Talk with the doctor before giving this drug to a child.

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:

- If giving this drug to your child and your child's weight changes, talk with the doctor. The dose of this drug may need to be changed.

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:

- 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.

- Slow heartbeat.
- A heartbeat that does not feel normal.

If your child is or may be sexually active:

- Not able to get or keep an erection.

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:

- Feeling dizzy, sleepy, tired, or weak.
- Dry mouth.
- Headache.
- Constipation.
- Upset stomach.
- Stomach pain.
- Trouble sleeping.

Extended-release tablets:

- Feeling irritable.
- Throwing up.
- Decreased appetite.

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.

Regular-release tablets:

- Give at bedtime.
- 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.

Extended-release tablets:

- Have your child swallow whole. Do not let your child chew, break, or crush.
- Give this drug by mouth with water or other liquid.
- Avoid giving this drug with high-fat meals.
- 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.
- Give this drug at the same time of day.

What do I do if my child misses a dose?

Regular-release tablets:

- 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 give 2 doses at the same time or extra doses.

Extended-release tablets:

- 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.
- If you miss giving your child this drug for 2 or more days, call your child's doctor to find out how to restart.

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

- Store at room temperature 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 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,

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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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