

Hydopa

contains the active ingredient methyl dopa

Consumer Medicine Information

What is in this leaflet

This leaflet answers some common questions about Hydopa.

It does not contain all the available information. It does not take the place of talking to your doctor or pharmacist.

All medicines have benefits and risks. Your doctor has weighed the risks of you taking Hydopa against the benefits they expect it will have for you.

If you have any concerns about taking this medicine, talk to your doctor or pharmacist.

Keep this leaflet with your medicine.

You may need to read it again.

What Hydopa is used for

Hydopa is used to lower high blood pressure, also called hypertension.

Everyone has blood pressure. This pressure helps get your blood all around your body. Your blood pressure may be different at different times of the day, depending on how busy or worried you are. You have hypertension (high blood pressure) when your blood pressure stays higher than is needed, even when you are calm and relaxed.

There are usually no symptoms of hypertension. The only way of knowing that you have hypertension is to have your blood pressure checked on a regular basis. If high blood pressure is not treated it can lead to serious health problems. You may feel fine and have no symptoms, but eventually hypertension can cause stroke, heart disease and kidney failure. Hydopa helps to lower your blood pressure.

Hydopa works by controlling impulses along certain nerve pathways and as a result, widens blood vessels so that blood passes through them more easily. This helps to lower blood pressure.

Ask your doctor if you have any questions about why Hydopa has been prescribed for you.

Your doctor may have prescribed Hydopa for another reason.

There is no evidence that Hydopa is addictive.

Hydopa is available only with a doctor's prescription.

Before you take Hydopa

When you must not take it

Do not take Hydopa if you are allergic to:

- medicines containing methyl dopa (e.g. Aldomet)
- any of the ingredients listed at the end of this leaflet.

Do not take Hydopa if you:

- currently have liver disease (e.g. hepatitis or cirrhosis)

- have hepatitis, cirrhosis or certain liver diseases.

Do not take Hydopa if you are taking a medicine called a monoamine oxidase inhibitor (MAOI).

MAOIs are used to treat depression and Parkinson's disease. Some examples of MAOIs include phenelzine, tranylcypromine and selegiline.

Ask your doctor or pharmacist if you are not sure whether you are taking one of these MAOI medicines.

Do not take Hydopa if the expiry date (Exp.) printed on the pack has passed.

If you take this medicine after the expiry date, it may not work as well.

Do not take Hydopa if the packaging shows signs of tampering or the tablets do not look quite right.

If you are not sure whether you should start taking Hydopa, talk to your doctor.

Before you start to take it

Tell your doctor if you are allergic to any other medicines, foods, dyes or preservatives.

Tell your doctor if you have, or have had, any medical conditions, especially the following:

- liver problems
- angina (chest pain).

Tell your doctor if you have or are suspected of having pheochromocytoma (a rare tumour of the adrenal gland)

Tell your doctor if you are undergoing dialysis (a procedure used to remove waste products from the blood of a person with kidney failure).

Tell your doctor if you are pregnant or plan to become pregnant.

Your doctor will discuss the risks and benefits of taking Hydopa during pregnancy.

Tell your doctor if you are breastfeeding or wish to breastfeed.

Hydopa passes into breast milk. Your doctor will discuss the risks and benefits of taking Hydopa when breastfeeding.

Your doctor may want to take special care if you have any of these conditions.

If you have not told your doctor about any of the above, tell them before you start taking Hydopa.

Taking other medicines

Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you are taking any other medicines, including any that you buy without a prescription from a pharmacy, supermarket or health food shop.

Some medicines may be affected by Hydopa, or may affect how well it works. These include:

- other medicines used to treat high blood pressure
- lithium, a medicine used to treat mood swings and some types of depression
- iron supplements and multivitamins containing iron.

You may need different amounts of your medicine or you may need to take different medicines.

Do not take Hydopa if you are taking a MAOI (e.g moclobemide, phenelzine and tranylecypromine)

Your doctor can tell you what to do if you are taking any of these medicines.

If you are not sure whether you are taking any of these medicines, check with your doctor or pharmacist.

Your doctor and pharmacist have more information on medicines to be careful with or avoid while taking Hydopa.

How to take Hydopa

Follow all directions given to you by your doctor and pharmacist carefully.

They may differ from the information contained in this leaflet.

If you do not understand the instructions on the pack, ask your doctor or pharmacist.

How much to take

The dose varies from person to person.

This depends on your condition and whether you are taking any other medicines.

Your doctor will tell you how many tablets you need to take each day and when to take them.

If you do not understand the instructions on the box, ask your doctor or pharmacist for help.

How to take Hydopa

Swallow the tablets whole with a glass of water.

When to take Hydopa

Take your medicine at about the same time each day, unless your doctor tells you otherwise.

If you are taking it twice a day, take the tablets at breakfast time and dinner time - that is, about 12 hours apart.

If you are taking it three times a day, take the tablets about 8 hours apart.

Taking it at the same time each day will have the best effect on your blood pressure. It will also help you remember when to take it.

Hydopa can be taken with or without food.

How long to take Hydopa for

Keep taking Hydopa for as long as your doctor recommends.

Hydopa helps control high blood pressure but does not cure it. To properly control your condition, Hydopa must be taken every day on a long-term basis.

If you forget to take Hydopa

If it is almost time for your next dose, skip the dose you missed and take your next dose when you are meant to.

Otherwise, take the missed dose as soon as you remember, and then go back to taking your tablets as you would normally.

Do not take a double dose to make up for the dose you missed.

If you are not sure what to do, ask your doctor or pharmacist.

If you take too much Hydopa (overdose)

Immediately telephone your doctor, or the Poisons Information Centre (telephone 13 11 26), or go to Accident and Emergency at the nearest hospital, if you think you or anyone else may have taken too much Hydopa. Do this even if there are no signs of discomfort or poisoning.

You may need urgent medical attention.

If you take too much Hydopa, you may feel dizzy, lightheaded, drowsy or you may faint. You may also experience nausea (feeling sick), vomiting, constipation, diarrhoea, gas/wind in the bowel or develop a bloated stomach.

While you are taking Hydopa

Things you must do

Before starting any new medicine, tell your doctor or pharmacist that you are taking Hydopa.

Tell all the doctors, dentists and pharmacists who are treating you that you are taking Hydopa.

If you need to have surgery that requires a general anaesthetic, tell your doctor or dentist that you are taking Hydopa. Your blood pressure may drop suddenly.

If you feel light-headed, dizzy or faint, get up slowly when getting out of bed or standing up.

You may feel light-headed or dizzy when you begin to take Hydopa or if the dose is increased. This is because your blood pressure is falling suddenly. Standing up slowly, especially when you get up from bed or sitting, will help your body get used to the change in position and blood pressure. The problem usually goes away after the first few days.

If you need to have any blood or urine tests, tell your doctor that you are taking Hydopa.

Hydopa may interfere with the results of some blood and urine tests.

If you develop a fever, tell your doctor.

Your doctor may ask you to have blood tests to make sure that Hydopa is not affecting your liver or blood.

If you going to have a blood transfusion, tell your doctor you are taking Hydopa or have taken it in the past few months.

Hydopa may interfere with the tests used to decide which blood group you receive.

Make sure you drink enough water during exercise and hot weather when you are taking Hydopa, especially if you sweat a lot.

If you do not drink enough water while taking it, you may faint or feel lightheaded or sick. This is because your body doesn't have enough fluid and your blood pressure is low. If you continue to feel unwell, tell your doctor.

Since Hydopa is meant to be taken regularly, keep a continuous supply of medicine so you don't run out, especially over weekends or on holidays.

Have your blood pressure checked regularly when your doctor says to make sure Hydopa is working.

Visit your doctor regularly so they can check on your progress.

Your doctor may want to check your liver function and blood count, especially within the first 12 weeks of starting Hydopa.

Things you must not do

Do not stop taking Hydopa, even if you feel better, unless advised by your doctor.

Do not use Hydopa to treat any other conditions unless your doctor tells you to.

Do not give Hydopa to anyone else, even if they have the same condition as you.

Things to be careful of

Be careful driving or operating machinery until you know how Hydopa affects you.

Hydopa may cause drowsiness, dizziness or lightheadedness in some people, especially after the first few doses, or if the dose is increased. If any of these occur, do not drive, operate machinery or do anything else that could be dangerous.

Be careful drinking alcohol while taking Hydopa.

Combining alcohol with Hydopa can make you more drowsy, dizzy or lightheaded.

Be careful getting up from a sitting or lying position.

Dizziness, lightheadedness or fainting may occur when you begin to take Hydopa, or if the dose is increased. This happens especially when you get up quickly from a sitting or lying position. Getting up slowly may help. This problem usually goes away after the first few days.

Side effects

Tell your doctor or pharmacist as soon as possible if you do not feel well while you are taking Hydopa.

Hydopa helps most people with high blood pressure, but it may have unwanted side effects in some people.

All medicines can have side effects. Sometimes they are serious, most of the time they are not. You may need medical treatment if you get some of the side effects.

Do not be alarmed by this list of possible side effects.

You may not experience any of them.

Ask your doctor or pharmacist to answer any questions you may have.

Tell your doctor if you notice any of the following and they worry you:

- dizziness, lightheadedness
- drowsiness
- headache.
- weakness

The above list includes the common and mild side effects of Hydopa, which may disappear with continued treatment. These side effects may occur at the beginning of treatment or when the dose is increased.

Tell your doctor immediately or go to Accident and Emergency at the nearest hospital if you notice any of the following:

- ongoing weakness

- fever shortly after starting Hydopa, for example, within the first 3 months
- yellowing of the eyes or skin (jaundice)
- darker urine than normal due to liver problems
- pale stools
- swelling of the feet or lower legs
- nightmares, feeling strange or depressed
- signs of frequent or worrying infections such as fever, chills, sore throat or mouth ulcers
- bleeding or bruising more easily than normal
- signs of anaemia such as tiredness, looking pale together with being short of breath when exercising and tingling or numbness of the hands or feet
- itchy skin rash or other skin problems
- a slow heart beat or pulse
- worsening of angina (chest pain).
- larger breasts than normal, especially in men.

These are all serious side effects. You may need urgent medical care. Serious side effects are rare.

Tell your doctor if you notice anything else that is making you feel unwell.

Other side effects not listed above may also occur in some patients. Some of these side effects (e.g. changes in liver function) can only be found when your doctor does tests from time to time to check your progress.

After taking Hydopa

Storage

Keep Hydopa where children cannot reach it.

A locked cupboard at least one-and-a-half metres above the ground is a good place to store medicines.

Keep your tablets in the pack until it is time to take them.

If you take the tablets out of the pack they will not keep well.

Keep your tablets in a cool dry place where the temperature stays below 30°C.

Do not store Hydopa or any other medicine in the bathroom or near a sink.

Do not leave Hydopa in the car or on window sills.

Heat and dampness can destroy some medicines.

Disposal

If your doctor tells you to stop taking Hydopa, or your tablets have passed their expiry date, ask your pharmacist what to do with any that are left over.

Product description

What it looks like

Hydopa tablets are round and yellow, marked "MD" over "250" on one side and "G" on the reverse.

Each pack contains 100 tablets.

Ingredients

The active ingredient in Hydopa is methyldopa. Each Hydopa tablet contains methyldopa equivalent to 250 mg of anhydrous methyldopa.

The tablets also contain the following inactive ingredients:

- anhydrous citric acid
- disodium edetate
- ethylcellulose
- sodium starch glycollate
- guar gum
- colloidal anhydrous silica
- magnesium stearate
- Opadry Yellow OY-8462 (includes colours 104, 110, 171).

Hydopa tablets are gluten free.

Manufacturer

Hydopa is made in Australia by:
Alphapharm Pty Limited
 (ABN 93 002 359 739)
 Level 1, 30 The Bond
 30-34 Hickson Road
 Millers Point NSW 2000
 Phone: (02) 9298 3999
 www.alphapharm.com.au

Australian registration number:
 Hydopa - AUST R 69482, 69483

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