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Papaverine

pronounced as (pa pav' er een)

Why is this medication prescribed?

Papaverine is used to improve blood flow in patients with circulation problems. It works by relaxing the blood vessels so that blood can flow more easily to the heart and through the body.

This medication is sometimes prescribed for other uses; ask your doctor or pharmacist for more information.

How should this medicine be used?

Papaverine comes as a tablet and extended-release (long-acting) capsule to take by mouth. The tablet usually is taken three to five times a day at evenly spaced intervals. The extended-release capsule usually is taken every 8-12 hours. Do not crush, chew, or divide the extended-release capsules. Follow the directions on your prescription label carefully, and ask your doctor or pharmacist to explain any part you do not understand. Take papaverine exactly as directed.

Papaverine may be habit-forming. Do not take larger doses, take it more often, or for a longer period than your doctor tells you to.

Papaverine controls high blood pressure but does not cure it. Continue to take papaverine even if you feel well. Do not stop taking papaverine without talking to your doctor.

Other uses for this medicine

Papaverine is also used to treat impotence in men. Talk to your doctor about the possible risks of using this drug for your condition.

What special precautions should I follow?

Before taking papaverine,

- tell your doctor and pharmacist if you are allergic to papaverine or any other drugs.
- tell your doctor and pharmacist what prescription and nonprescription medications you are taking, especially levodopa (Larodopa, Sinemet) and vitamins.

- tell your doctor if you have or have ever had heart disease, an AV block (a heart rhythm disturbance), or glaucoma.
- tell your doctor if you are pregnant, plan to become pregnant, or are breast-feeding. If you become pregnant while taking papaverine, call your doctor.
- if you are having surgery, including dental surgery, tell the doctor or dentist that you are taking papaverine.
- you should know that this drug may make you drowsy or dizzy. Do not drive a car or operate machinery until you know how it affects you.
- ask your doctor about the safe use of alcohol while you are taking papaverine. Alcohol can make the side effects from papaverine worse.

What should I do if I forget a dose?

Take the missed dose as soon as you remember it. However, if it is almost time for the next dose, skip the missed dose and continue your regular dosing schedule. Do not take a double dose to make up for a missed one.

What side effects can this medication cause?

Papaverine may cause side effects. Tell your doctor if any of these symptoms are severe or do not go away:

- flushing (feeling of warmth)
- sweating
- headache
- tiredness
- dizziness
- skin rash
- upset stomach
- loss of appetite
- diarrhea
- constipation
- stomach pain

If you experience either of the following symptoms, call your doctor immediately:

- yellowing of the skin or eyes
- irregular heartbeat

If you experience a serious side effect, you or your doctor may send a report to the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) MedWatch Adverse Event Reporting program online (<http://www.fda.gov/Safety/MedWatch> [<http://www.fda.gov/Safety/MedWatch>]) or by phone (1-800-332-1088).

What should I know about storage and disposal of this medication?

Keep this medication in the container it came in, tightly closed, and out of reach of children. Store at room temperature and away from excess heat and moisture (not in the bathroom).

It is important to keep all medication out of sight and reach of children as many containers (such as weekly pill minders and those for eye drops, creams, patches, and inhalers) are not child-resistant and young children can open them easily. To protect young children from poisoning, always lock safety caps and immediately place the medication in a safe location – one that is up and away and out of their sight and reach. <http://www.upandaway.org> [<http://www.upandaway.org>]

Unneeded medications should be disposed of in special ways to ensure that pets, children, and other people cannot consume them. However, you should not flush this medication down the toilet. Instead, the best way to dispose of your medication is through a medicine take-back program. Talk to your pharmacist or contact your local garbage/recycling department to learn about take-back programs in your community. See the FDA's Safe Disposal of Medicines website (<http://goo.gl/c4Rm4p> [<http://goo.gl/c4Rm4p>]) for more information if you do not have access to a take-back program.

In case of emergency/overdose

In case of overdose, call the poison control helpline at 1-800-222-1222. Information is also available online at <https://www.poisonhelp.org/help> [<https://www.poisonhelp.org/help>]. If the victim has collapsed, had a seizure, has trouble breathing, or can't be awakened, immediately call emergency services at 911.

What other information should I know?

Keep all appointments with your doctor and the laboratory. Your doctor may order certain tests to monitor your liver function.

Do not let anyone else take your medication. Ask your pharmacist any questions you have about refilling your prescription.

It is important for you to keep a written list of all of the prescription and nonprescription (over-the-counter) medicines you are taking, as well as any products such as vitamins, minerals, or other dietary supplements. You should bring this list with you each time you visit a doctor or if you are admitted to a hospital. It is also important information to carry with you in case of emergencies.

Brand names

- Pavacot®

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