

AMIODARONE

Amiodarone is an anti-arrhythmic drug.

It is used to treat fast or irregular heartbeats, it does this by slowing down the electrical impulses that cause fast or irregular heartbeats.

Monitoring

When your medication is prescribed by the GP, you will be required to have regular blood test monitoring, to ensure their optimum safety.

These blood tests are every 6 months and are comprised of a Liver Function Test (LFT), a Kidney Function Test (U&E) and a Thyroid Function Test (TFT).

You may also be asked to have a Chest X-Ray and an ECG if clinically indicated.

You should also have an annual eye test whilst taking Amiodarone, which you can arrange through your optician.

Side Effects

When you should seek medical advice immediately: (If it occurs out of house you can call a GP on 111. If symptoms are severe go to Hospital)

- worsening skin rash with or without blisters or lesions, particularly around your lips, eyes, mouth, nose and genitals.
- new or worsening cough and difficulties in breathing - Amiodarone can cause inflammation of the lungs that can interfere with breathing and cause wheezing or coughing.
- any yellowing of the skin or the eyes, or dark coloured urine - Amiodarone can interfere with the liver, which may cause the build-up of waste substances in the skin, eyes and urine.

Tell your doctor if:

- you notice any blue or grey colouring of your skin.
- you have blurred vision.
- you are feeling extremely tired or restless, unable to stand the heat or cold and having weight gain or weight loss - Amiodarone can make you produce too much or too little thyroid hormone.
- numbness in fingers or toes.
- metallic taste.
- muscle pain.

Cautions

You should:

- Avoid grapefruit juice as this can increase the risk of side effects.
- Limit your alcohol intake as this can increase the risk of side effects.

Your skin may be more sensitive to the sun while you're taking Amiodarone:

- Keep out of direct sunlight while taking this medicine and for a few months after you have finished taking it.
- Stay out of bright sun and use a high factor sun cream (SPF 30 or above) even on cloudy days.
- Cover your head with a hat and wear clothes to cover your arms and legs.
- Do not use a sun lamp or sun beds.

You may develop small deposits in your eyes that may cause dazzling with bright lights at night, but these should not affect your daytime vision.

You might be dazzled by headlights at night so if this affects you, you should not drive at night, tell your doctor if this becomes a problem.

Pregnancy and Breastfeeding

Amiodarone is not recommended during pregnancy. Please consult your GP regarding contraception.

If you become pregnant whilst taking Amiodarone, please contact your Specialist or GP immediately.

You should not breastfeed whilst taking Amiodarone.