

# Atropine

## Why is this medication prescribed?

Atropine produces many effects in the body, including relief from spasms of the gastrointestinal tract (stomach and intestines), the bladder, and the biliary tract. This is helpful in controlling conditions such as colitis, spastic bladder, diverticulitis, infant colic, renal and biliary colic, peptic ulcer, and irritable bowel syndrome.

Atropine also reduces the secretions of many organs, thereby helping to control conditions such as excessive stomach acid production and excessive secretion from the pancreas; to reduce secretions of the nose, lungs, salivary glands, and stomach before surgery; and to help dry up excessive mucus production associated with diseases, infections, and allergies.

Atropine is used to treat the rigidity, tremor, excessive salivation, and sweating caused by Parkinson's disease.

Atropine also has effects on the heart. It is used during surgery to maintain proper heart function, during emergencies involving the heart, and to treat certain heart disorders.

Atropine is used to control laughing and crying episodes that are caused by brain tumors.

Atropine also has effect on the eyes and is available in an ophthalmic (eye) formulation.

## How should this medicine be used?

Depending on your condition atropine is administered by your doctor by Intramuscular or Intravenous injection. It is also available as ophthalmic drops.

## What special precautions should I follow?

Use caution when driving, operating machinery, or performing other hazardous activities. Atropine may cause dizziness, drowsiness, or blurred vision. If you experience dizziness, drowsiness, or blurred vision, avoid these activities.

## What special dietary instructions should I follow?

Use alcohol cautiously. Alcohol may increase drowsiness and dizziness while you are taking atropine.

## What should I do if I forget a dose?

Take the missed dose as soon as you remember. However, if it is almost time for your next dose, skip the missed dose and take only the next regularly scheduled dose. Do not take a double dose of this medication.

### **What side effects can this medication cause?**

If you experience any of the following serious side effects, stop taking atropine and seek emergency medical attention:

- an allergic reaction (swelling of your lips, tongue, or face, difficulty breathing, closing of your throat, or hives);
- an irregular or fast heart rate;
- rash or flushing; or
- eye pain.

Other, less serious side effects may be more likely to occur. Continue to take atropine and talk to your doctor if you experience

- headache, dizziness or lightheadedness;
- weakness or nervousness;
- blurred vision, large pupils, or sensitivity of the eyes to bright light;
- nausea, bloating, heartburn, or constipation;
- changes in taste;
- difficulty urinating;
- decreased sweating; or
- nasal congestion, stuffiness, or a dry mouth.

### **What storage conditions are needed for this medicine?**

Store in a cool and dry place. Keep away from children and pets.

### **In case of emergency/overdose**

Symptoms of a atropine overdose include headache; nausea; vomiting; dry mouth; difficulty swallowing; blurred vision; dilated pupils; hot, dry skin; dizziness; drowsiness; confusion; anxiety; seizures; weak pulse; and an irregular heartbeat.

Call the poison control center or Emergency room

### **What other information should I know?**

It is not known whether atropine will harm an unborn baby. Do not take atropine without first talking to your doctor if you are pregnant.

It is not known whether atropine passes into breast milk. Do not take atropine without first talking to your doctor if you are breast-feeding a baby.