Moxonidine for high blood pressure (Physiotens)

When you first start moxonidine, take one tablet (200 micrograms) daily, in the morning. The most common side-effects are a dry mouth, feeling sleepy, and a stomach upset. These tend to be mild and soon settle down. Treatment with moxonidine is usually long-term - continue to take the tablets until your doctor tells you otherwise.

About moxonidine for high blood pressure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of medicine</th>
<th>A centrally acting antihypertensive medicine</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Used for</td>
<td>High blood pressure (hypertension)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Also called</td>
<td>Physiotens®</td>
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<tr>
<td>Available as</td>
<td>Tablets</td>
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Moxonidine is a medicine which works on your blood vessels. You will have been prescribed it for high blood pressure (hypertension). Most people with high blood pressure do not feel unwell, but it is important that high blood pressure is treated even if you feel fine. This is because high blood pressure can be damaging to your blood vessels and can put a strain on your heart. If left untreated, high blood pressure is a risk factor that can increase your chance of developing heart disease, a stroke, and other serious conditions. It is likely that you will be prescribed moxonidine if other (more frequently used) medicines are not suitable for you, or if they have not been sufficient to control your high blood pressure.

Moxonidine works by relaxing the muscles in the walls of your blood vessels. This means that your blood vessels widen, which reduces your blood pressure and allows blood and oxygen to circulate more freely around your body.

Before taking moxonidine

Some medicines are not suitable for people with certain conditions, and sometimes a medicine can only be used if extra care is taken. For these reasons, before you start taking moxonidine it is important that your doctor knows:

- If you are pregnant or breastfeeding.
- If you have a heart disorder, such as a slow heartbeat or heart failure.
- If you have angina chest pain.
- If you have a problem with the way your kidneys work.
- If you are taking any other medicines. This includes any medicines you are taking which are available to buy without a prescription, as well as herbal and complementary medicines.
- If you have ever had an allergic reaction to a medicine.

How to take moxonidine

- Before you start the treatment, read the manufacturer's printed information leaflet from inside the pack. It will give you more information about moxonidine and will provide you with a full list of the side-effects which you could experience from taking it.
- Take moxonidine exactly as your doctor tells you to. It is usual to start by taking one tablet of 200 micrograms each day, in the morning. If it is necessary, your doctor will then increase your dose after a few weeks. You may be asked to take either a higher strength of tablet, or to take two tablets a day. Increasing the dose slowly like this allows your doctor to make sure that you have the dose that helps your condition but avoids any unwanted symptoms.
- Try to take your doses at the same time(s) of day each day, as this will help you to remember to take moxonidine regularly. If you are asked to take one dose a day, take it in the morning. If you are asked to take two doses a day, take your first dose in the morning and the second dose in the evening.
- Swallow the tablet whole with a drink of water. You can take moxonidine either before or after a meal.
- If you forget to take a dose, take it as soon as you remember (unless it is nearly time for your next dose, in which case leave out the missed dose). Do not take two doses together to make up for a forgotten dose.
Getting the most from your treatment

- Try to keep your regular appointments with your doctor. This is so your doctor can check on your progress.
- There are three different strengths of moxonidine tablets available - 200 micrograms, 300 micrograms and 400 micrograms. Each time you collect a fresh supply of tablets it is a good idea to check to make sure you receive the strength you are expecting. If you have any questions, please ask your pharmacist to advise you.
- Drinking alcohol while you are on moxonidine is not recommended. Alcohol will add to the blood pressure-lowering effect of moxonidine which will increase the chances of you experiencing side-effects such as feeling dizzy.
- If you buy any medicines, check with a pharmacist that they are suitable for you to take. This is because some medicines (such as some anti-inflammatory painkillers) can interfere with the way moxonidine works.
- If you are due to have an operation or dental treatment, it is important to tell the person carrying out the treatment that you are taking moxonidine. This is because some anaesthetics can affect your blood pressure.
- Your doctor will advise you on what lifestyle changes you can make to help your condition. These may include losing weight if you are overweight, taking regular exercise, eating a healthy diet, cutting back if you drink a lot of alcohol, stopping smoking, and reducing the amount of salt in your meals and caffeine in your drinks. It is important that you follow any advice you are given.
- Treatment with moxonidine is usually long-term unless you experience an adverse effect. Continue to take the tablets unless your doctor tells you to stop. Stopping treatment suddenly can cause problems in some people, so your doctor may want you to reduce your dose gradually if this becomes necessary.

Can moxonidine cause problems?

Along with their useful effects, most medicines can cause unwanted side-effects although not everyone experiences them. The table below contains some of the most common ones associated with moxonidine. You will find a full list in the manufacturer's information leaflet supplied with your medicine. The unwanted effects often improve as your body adjusts to the new medicine, but speak with your doctor or pharmacist if any of the following continue or become troublesome.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very common moxonidine side-effects (these affect more than 1 in 10 people)</th>
<th>What can I do if I experience this?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dry mouth</td>
<td>Try chewing sugar-free gum or sucking sugar-free sweets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common moxonidine side-effects (these affect less than 1 in 10 people)</td>
<td>What can I do if I experience this?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeling sleepy or dizzy</td>
<td>Do not drive and do not use tools or machines while affected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Headache, backache</td>
<td>Drink plenty of water and ask your pharmacist to recommend a suitable painkiller. If the aches continue, let your doctor know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeling sick (nausea), stomach upset, indigestion, diarrhoea</td>
<td>Eat simple meals - avoid rich or spicy foods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulties sleeping, thought disturbances, feeling flushed or tired, itchy rash</td>
<td>If any become troublesome, speak with your doctor for advice</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you experience any other symptoms which you think may be due to the tablets, speak with your doctor or pharmacist for further advice.

How to store moxonidine

- Keep all medicines out of the reach and sight of children.
- Store in a cool, dry place, away from direct heat and light.

Important information about all medicines
Never take more than the prescribed dose. If you suspect that you or someone else might have taken an overdose of this medicine go to the accident and emergency department of your local hospital. Take the container with you, even if it is empty.

This medicine is for you. Never give it to other people even if their condition appears to be the same as yours.

Do not keep out-of-date or unwanted medicines. Take them to your local pharmacy which will dispose of them for you.

If you have any questions about this medicine ask your pharmacist.

Further reading & references


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