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Haloperidol: Patient drug information Lexicomp®

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(For additional information [see "Haloperidol: Drug information"](#) and [see "Haloperidol: Pediatric drug information"](#))

Brand Names: US Haldol; Haldol Decanoate

Brand Names: Canada Apo-Haloperidol; Haloperidol Injection, USP; Haloperidol-LA; Haloperidol-LA Omega; Novo-Peridol; PMS-Haloperidol; PMS-Haloperidol LA

Warning

- There is a higher chance of death in older adults who take this drug for mental problems caused by dementia. Most of the deaths were linked to heart disease or infection. This drug is not approved to treat mental problems caused by dementia.

What is this drug used for?

- It is used to treat schizophrenia.
- It is used to treat Tourette's syndrome.
- It is used to treat problems with how one acts.
- It is used to treat mood problems.
- It may be given to you for other reasons. Talk with the doctor.

What do I need to tell my doctor BEFORE I take this drug?

- If you have an allergy to haloperidol or any other part of this drug.
- If you are allergic to any drugs like this one, any other drugs, foods, or other substances. Tell your doctor about the allergy and what signs you had, like rash; hives; itching; shortness of breath; wheezing; cough; swelling of face, lips, tongue, or throat; or any other signs.
- If you have Parkinson's disease.
- If you are very sleepy.
- If you are breast-feeding. Do not breast-feed while you take this drug.

This is not a list of all drugs or health problems that interact with this drug.

Tell your doctor and pharmacist about all of your drugs (prescription or OTC, natural products, vitamins) and health problems. You must check to make sure that it is safe for you to take this drug with all of your drugs and health problems. Do not start, stop, or change the dose of any drug without checking with your doctor.

What are some things I need to know or do while I take this drug?

All products:

- Tell all of your health care providers that you take this drug. This includes your doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and dentists.
- Avoid driving and doing other tasks or actions that call for you to be alert until you see how this drug affects you.
- Have blood work checked as you have been told by the doctor. Talk with the doctor.
- If you have high blood sugar (diabetes), you will need to watch your blood sugar closely.
- Avoid drinking alcohol while taking this drug.
- Talk with your doctor before you use other drugs and natural products that slow your actions.
- Sudden death and heartbeats that are not normal have happened with this drug. Very high doses raise the chance of these problems. Tell your doctor if you have a heartbeat that is not normal like long QT on ECG, electrolyte problems like low potassium or magnesium levels, heart problems, low thyroid function, or a family member that has a long QT on ECG. Tell your doctor if you take any drugs that may raise the chance of a heartbeat that is not normal. Ask your doctor if you are not sure. Talk with your doctor.
- A very bad and sometimes deadly health problem called neuroleptic malignant syndrome (NMS) may happen. Call your doctor right away if you have any fever, muscle cramps or stiffness, dizziness, very bad headache, confusion, change in thinking, fast heartbeat, heartbeat that does not feel normal, or are sweating a lot.
- Be careful in hot weather or while being active. Drink lots of fluids to stop fluid loss.
- Low white blood cell counts have happened with drugs like this one. This may lead to a higher chance of getting an infection. Deadly infections have rarely happened. Tell your doctor if you have ever had a low white blood cell count. Call your doctor right away if you have signs of infection like fever, chills, or sore throat. Talk with your doctor.
- If you also take lithium, talk with your doctor. A few people who were taking this drug along with lithium have had very bad side effects and brain problems that did not go away.
- Dizziness, sleepiness, and feeling less stable may happen with this drug. These may lead to falling. Broken bones or other health problems can happen from falling. Talk with the doctor.
- Some people have gotten pneumonia when taking this drug. Sometimes, this has been deadly. Call your doctor right away if you have fever, chest pain, cough, shortness of breath, or wheezing.
- If you are 65 or older, use this drug with care. You could have more side effects.
- Tell your doctor if you are pregnant or plan on getting pregnant. You will need to talk about the benefits and risks of using this drug while you are pregnant.
- Taking this drug in the third trimester of pregnancy may lead to muscle movements that cannot be controlled and withdrawal in the newborn. Talk with the doctor.

All oral products:

- Do not give to a child younger than 3 years of age.

What are some side effects that I need to call my doctor about right away?

WARNING/CAUTION: Even though it may be rare, some people may have very bad and sometimes deadly side effects when taking a drug. Tell your doctor or get medical help right away if you have any of the following signs or symptoms that may be related to a very bad side effect:

- Signs of an allergic reaction, like rash; hives; itching; red, swollen, blistered, or peeling skin with or without fever; wheezing; tightness in the chest or throat; trouble breathing, swallowing, or talking; unusual hoarseness; or swelling of the mouth, face, lips, tongue, or throat.
- Trouble controlling body movements, twitching, change in balance, trouble swallowing or speaking.
- Very bad dizziness or passing out.
- Shakiness, trouble moving around, or stiffness.
- Not able to pass urine.
- Feeling very tired or weak.
- Any unexplained bruising or bleeding.
- Change in eyesight.
- Hallucinations (seeing or hearing things that are not there).
- Seizures.
- Mood changes.
- Not able to control eye movements.
- Enlarged breasts.
- Not able to get or keep an erection.
- Lowered interest in sex.
- For women, no period.
- Nipple discharge.
- Some people who take this drug may get a very bad muscle problem called tardive dyskinesia. This muscle problem may not go away even if this drug is stopped. Sometimes, signs may lessen or go away over time after this drug is stopped. The risk of tardive dyskinesia may be greater in people with diabetes and in older adults, especially older women. The risk is also greater the longer you take this drug or with higher doses. Muscle problems may also occur after short-term use with low doses. Call your doctor right away if you have trouble controlling body movements or if you have muscle problems with your tongue, face, mouth, or jaw like tongue sticking out, puffing cheeks, mouth puckering, or chewing.
- Call your doctor right away if you have a painful erection (hard penis) or an erection that lasts for longer than 4 hours. This may happen even when you are not having sex. If this is not treated right away, it may lead to lasting sex problems and you may not be able to have sex.

What are some other side effects of this drug?

All drugs may cause side effects. However, many people have no side effects or only have minor side effects. Call your doctor or get medical help if any of these side effects or any other side effects bother you or do not go away:

- Feeling sleepy.

- Anxiety.
- Hard stools (constipation).
- Dry mouth.
- Upset stomach or throwing up.
- Loose stools (diarrhea).
- Headache.
- Not hungry.
- Restlessness.
- Not able to sleep.

These are not all of the side effects that may occur. If you have questions about side effects, call your doctor. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects.

You may report side effects to your national health agency.

How is this drug best taken?

Use this drug as ordered by your doctor. Read all information given to you. Follow all instructions closely.

All oral products:

- Take with or without food. Take with food if it causes an upset stomach.
- To gain the most benefit, do not miss doses.
- Keep taking this drug as you have been told by your doctor or other health care provider, even if you feel well.

Oral solution:

- Measure liquid doses carefully. Use the measuring device that comes with this drug.
- You may take this drug without mixing, or you may mix with food or drink as you have been told.

Short-acting injection:

- It is given as a shot into a muscle.
- It may be given as a shot into a vein.

Long-acting injection:

- It is given as a shot into a muscle.

All products:

- If you have been taking this drug on a regular basis and you stop it all of a sudden, you may have signs of withdrawal. Do not stop taking this drug all of a sudden without calling your doctor. Tell your doctor if you have any bad effects.

What do I do if I miss a dose?

All oral products:

- Take a missed dose as soon as you think about it.
- If it is close to the time for your next dose, skip the missed dose and go back to your normal time.
- Do not take 2 doses at the same time or extra doses.

All injection products:

- Call your doctor to find out what to do.

How do I store and/or throw out this drug?

All oral products:

- Store at room temperature.
- Protect from light.
- Store in a dry place. Do not store in a bathroom.

Oral solution:

- Do not freeze.

All injection products:

- If you need to store this drug at home, talk with your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist about how to store it.

All products:

- Keep all drugs in a safe place. Keep all drugs out of the reach of children and pets.
- Throw away unused or expired drugs. Do not flush down a toilet or pour down a drain unless you are told to do so. Check with your pharmacist if you have questions about the best way to throw out drugs. There may be drug take-back programs in your area.

General drug facts

- If your symptoms or health problems do not get better or if they become worse, call your doctor.
- Do not share your drugs with others and do not take anyone else's drugs.
- Keep a list of all your drugs (prescription, natural products, vitamins, OTC) with you. Give this list to your doctor.
- Talk with the doctor before starting any new drug, including prescription or OTC, natural products, or vitamins.
- Some drugs may have another patient information leaflet. If you have any questions about this drug, please talk with your doctor, nurse, pharmacist, or other health care provider.
- If you think there has been an overdose, call your poison control center or get medical care right away. Be ready to tell or show what was taken, how much, and when it happened.

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