

The content on the UpToDate website is not intended nor recommended as a substitute for medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. Always seek the advice of your own physician or other qualified health care professional regarding any medical questions or conditions. The use of UpToDate content is governed by the [UpToDate Terms of Use](#). ©2018 UpToDate, Inc. All rights reserved.

Guanfacine: Patient drug information Lexicomp®

Copyright 1978-2018 Lexicomp, Inc. All rights reserved.

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

Brand Names: US Intuniv; Tenex [DSC]

Brand Names: Canada Intuniv XR

What is this drug used for?

- It is used to treat high blood pressure.
- It is used to treat attention deficit problems with hyperactivity.
- 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 guanfacine 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 are taking another drug that has the same drug in it.

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.
- To lower the chance of feeling dizzy or passing out, rise slowly if you have been sitting or lying down. Be careful going up and down stairs.
- Check blood pressure and heart rate as the doctor has told you. Talk with the doctor.
- Avoid drinking alcohol while taking this drug.
- Talk with your doctor before you use other drugs and natural products that slow your actions.
- If you are taking this drug and have high blood pressure, talk with your doctor before using OTC products that may raise blood pressure. These include cough or cold drugs, diet pills, stimulants, ibuprofen or like products, and some natural products or aids.
- Tell your doctor if you have too much sweat, fluid loss, throwing up, or loose stools. This may lead to low blood pressure.
- Be careful in hot weather or while being active. Drink lots of fluids to stop fluid loss.
- Do not stop taking this drug all of a sudden without calling your doctor. High blood pressure and fast heartbeat can happen if this drug is stopped all of a sudden. Other signs of withdrawal like headache, shakiness, or feeling agitated, confused, or nervous can also happen. If these get worse and are not treated, it could lead to a very bad health problem with signs like feeling very sleepy or tired, very bad headache, throwing up, change in eyesight, or seizures. If you need to stop this drug, you will want to slowly stop it as ordered by your doctor.
- Tell your doctor if you have been throwing up and cannot take this drug.
- If your doctor has told you to lower your dose or slowly stop taking this drug, you will need to check your blood pressure and heart rate closely. Follow what your doctor has told you to do.
- Use with care in children. Talk with the doctor.
- 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.
- Tell your doctor if you are breast-feeding. You will need to talk about any risks to your baby.

Extended-release tablets:

- If giving to your child, the dose of this drug may need to be changed as your child's weight changes. Have your child's weight checked often. Talk with the doctor before changing your child's dose.

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.
- Very bad dizziness or passing out.
- Slow heartbeat.
- A heartbeat that does not feel normal.
- Feeling very sleepy.
- Not able to get or keep an erection.

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:

All products:

- Dizziness.
- Feeling sleepy.
- Dry mouth.
- Feeling tired or weak.
- Headache.
- Hard stools (constipation).
- Upset stomach.
- Not able to sleep.
- Belly pain.

Extended-release tablets:

- Feeling irritable.
- Throwing up.
- Not hungry.

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 products:

- Take with or without food.
- 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.

Extended-release tablets:

- Swallow whole with some water or other drink.
- Do not chew, break, or crush.
- Avoid taking this drug with high-fat meals.

What do I do if I miss a dose?

Short-acting tablets:

- 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.

Extended-release tablets:

- Skip the missed dose and go back to your normal time.
- Do not take 2 doses at the same time or extra doses.
- If you miss 2 or more days of this drug, call your doctor to find out how to restart.

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

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

Use of UpToDate is subject to the [Subscription and License Agreement](#).