METHYLDOPA

meth-il-doe-pa

What does it do?

Methyldopa is used to treat high blood pressure.

Before you start

- Tell your doctor if you have heart, liver or kidney problems, a blood disorder, depression, or Parkinson's disease.
- Tell your doctor if you are pregnant, planning to become pregnant, or breastfeeding.

How should you take it?

Take *methyldopa* regularly as directed with a glass of water.

What if you forget a dose?

Take the missed dose as soon as you remember. If it is close to the time for your next dose, skip the missed dose and carry on as normal. Do not take two doses at the same time.

Can you take other medicines?

Some medicines available without a prescription may react with *methyldopa* including:

- anti-inflammatories, such as diclofenac (e.g. Voltaren®), ibuprofen (e.g. Nurofen®), or aspirin (e.g. Disprin®, in doses used for pain relief). These can also be found in some cold and flu medicines (e.g. Nurofen Cold and Flu®).
- iron supplements (e.g. Ferro-Tab®)

Tell your pharmacist or doctor about all medicines or treatments that you may be taking, including vitamins, herbal products or recreational drugs.

What side effects might you notice?

Side Effects	Recommended action
Slow heartbeat Symptoms of liver problems including: yellow skin or eyes, itching, dark urine, pale bowel motions, abdominal pain Reduced number of blood cells that help your blood to clot - symptoms include: easy or unusual bruising or bleeding Fever	Tell your doctor immediately
Feeling restless, strange or uncontrolled movements, tremor, stiffness Tiredness, dizziness, pale skin	Tell your doctor
Headache, drowsiness, strange dreams, low mood Swollen feet or legs, short of breath Dry mouth Changes in sexual function Skin irritation	Tell your doctor if troublesome
Lightheaded or dizzy after standing up	Stand up slowly. If it continues, or is severe, tell your doctor

If you notice any other effects, discuss them with your doctor or pharmacist.

Other information:

- *Methyldopa* can impair your ability to do tasks such as driving or using machines. Alcohol makes this worse. Discuss your risk with your health professional. (search NZTA - Are you safe to drive?)
- Do not stop taking *methyldopa* without talking to your doctor as this may cause a sudden increase in your blood pressure.