Te Whatu Ora
Health New Zealand
Waitaha Canterbury

AMIODARONE

a-mee-oh-da-rone

What does it do?

Amiodarone is used to treat and prevent irregular heartbeats.

Before you start

- Tell your doctor if you have thyroid, lung or liver problems.
- Tell your doctor if you are pregnant, planning to become pregnant, or breastfeeding.
- You will need tests to check how well your lungs, liver and thyroid are working before you start, and while you are taking *amiodarone*.

How should you take it?

Take *amiodarone* regularly as directed with a glass of water. You can take it with or without food.

What if you forget a dose?

If it is nearly time for your next dose, skip the missed dose and take your next dose at the usual time. Otherwise, take the missed dose as soon as you remember. Do not take two doses at the same time.

Can you take other medicines?

Amiodarone can react with many medicines, sometimes with severe results. Remember to tell your pharmacist or doctor you are taking *amiodarone* before starting any other medicines or treatments, including over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, herbal products or recreational drugs.

What side effects might you notice?

Side Effects	Recommended action
Symptoms of heart problems including: fluttering, pounding or pain in your chest, feeling your heart skips a beat, dizziness or fainting Symptoms of liver problems including: yellow skin or eyes, itching, dark urine, pale bowel motions, abdominal pain Short of breath, persistent dry cough Changes in vision	Tell your doctor immediately
Feeling tired, unexplained weight gain or loss, feeling hotter or colder than normal (may be a thyroid problem) Tingling or numbness, loss of co-ordination/walking or handwriting problems, strange or uncontrolled movements	Tell your doctor
Trouble sleeping Change in skin colour (blue, grey), more sensitive to sunlight (sunburn or rash)	Tell your doctor if troublesome
Nausea, vomiting	Common when you first start but should improve.

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

Other information:

- Protect yourself from too much sunlight while taking *amiodarone*, and for several months after stopping. Always cover up and apply a thick layer of broad spectrum sunscreen (at least SPF 30) when outside. Do not use sunbeds.
- Grapefruit, grapefruit juice or sour/Seville oranges may react with *amiodarone*. Discuss with your pharmacist.
- *Amiodarone* stays in your body for a long time. This means some side effects and reactions with other medicines can happen even after you stop taking it. Talk to your pharmacist or doctor for more information.