

Clozapine (Clozaril®)

Clozapine

Clozapine is a medicine used to treat schizophrenia. Schizophrenia is a long-lasting (chronic) brain disease that causes behavior changes. You may hear voices or have thoughts that other people are trying to read your mind, control your thoughts or cause you harm.

Clozapine is often given when other medicines do not work. It decreases the extra messages (neurotransmitters) in the brain which make it hard to think clearly. This medicine will only help relieve symptoms. It will not cure schizophrenia.

Because clozapine can lower your white blood cells, you are at an increased risk of infection. You will need to have blood tests every week for the first 6 months and every other week after that. Your health care provider may adjust the dose before finding the right one for you.

How Is It Given?

Clozapine is a pill that is taken 1 to 3 times each day.

What Side Effects May Occur?

This is a partial list of the side effects you may have with this medicine. You may have some, all or none of those listed, or you may have other side effects not listed.

Call your health care provider if you have any of these symptoms or if they do not go away:

- drowsiness
- diarrhea
- constipation

- restlessness
- headache.

Special Notes

- You will need to have lab work done before your health care provider can prescribe clozapine. Your health care provider will talk with you about this during your visit and order any labs needed.
- Before starting to take clozapine, tell your health care provider:
 - about any health issues you have
 - what medicines (prescription and over-the-counter), herbal products or natural remedies you are taking
 - if you smoke.
- Take clozapine every day as prescribed by your health care provider. Take it with a full glass of water. You may take it with food.
- Take it even if you feel well.
- Do not stop taking clozapine unless your health care provider tells you to do so.
- Talk with your health care provider or pharmacist before you start taking any other medicine.
- If you miss a dose for 2 or more days in a row, call your health care provider before you continue taking it.
- Store clozapine in its original container away from heat, moisture and light.

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- Keep this and all medicines out of reach of children and pets.
- Do not take old (expired) medicine. Never share your clozapine with others.

When To Call 911 or Seek Emergency Help

Call 911 or go to the nearest hospital Emergency Department right away if you have:

- a blistering, red, peeling skin rash
- chest pain
- problems breathing or fast breathing
- weak or rapid heartbeat
- feeling lightheaded or faint
- extreme tiredness
- fever with chills, cough, sore throat and body aches or fever with sweating, confusion, uneven heartbeat and muscle stiffness

- seizures
- muscle movements you cannot control or tremors
- increased thirst, urination and weakness
- upset stomach (nausea), throwing up (vomiting), loss of appetite, pain in your upper stomach
- dark-colored urine or pale stools
- pain in your lower leg
- swelling in your hands, ankles or feet
- yellowing of your skin or whites of your eyes.

Do not drive yourself to a hospital Emergency Department. Have someone else drive you.

For more complete medicine information or for questions about this medicine, ask your health care provider or pharmacist.