

Methadone (Methadone HCl Intensol, Dolophine[®] HCl)

Methadone

Methadone is an opioid (narcotic) used to help relieve severe, long-lasting (chronic) pain.

How It Is Given?

It is given by:

- tablet or liquid by mouth
- injection into a muscle or vein.

Possible Side Effects

This is a partial list of 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. Most side effects last only a short time.

Common:

- constipation
- nausea, vomiting
- dizziness
- drowsiness
- dry mouth

Less common:

- trouble breathing
- loss of appetite
- confusion
- itching or rash
- sweating, flushing

Special Notes

- Tell your doctor if you are pregnant or breastfeeding.
- Do not take more methadone than your doctor has prescribed.
- Methadone will make you drowsy, especially at the beginning of treatment. It may affect your ability to drive or operate machinery.
- Do not drink alcoholic beverages while taking methadone.
- Tell your doctor if you are taking other medicines which can make you drowsy, such as antidepressants, allergy or cold tablets, antianxiety medicines, muscle relaxants, or other pain medicines.
- Tell your doctor if you have conditions that make it hard for you to breathe (asthma), or if you have ever had a head injury or a seizure.
- Talk with your doctor before stopping this medicine. You may need to take smaller doses before completely stopping this medicine.
- You may have heard that methadone is also used as part of treatment for drug addiction. You have been prescribed methadone to treat pain, not addiction. Be sure to let your doctor and others know that you are taking it for this reason.

(over)

- If you miss a dose, take the missed dose as soon as you can. If it is almost time for your next dose, wait until then and skip the missed dose. Do not take two doses at the same time. You may need to take a dose of your breakthrough pain medicine if you miss a dose.
- Keep out of reach of children.
- Store your medicine in a safe and locked area.
- Never share this medicine with others.

When To Call Your Doctor

You should call your doctor right away if you have:

- sudden shortness of breath within the first 7 days of starting methadone
- trouble breathing at any time while taking methadone
- slow heartbeat
- hives, or skin rash
- severe confusion
- visual changes
- hallucinations.

You should tell your doctor if you are having problems with:

- constipation
- dry mouth, nausea or vomiting
- headache
- excessive drowsiness or dizziness
- excessive sweating or flushing.

For more complete drug information or for questions about this medicine, please ask your doctor, nurse or pharmacist.