

Hyoscine Hydrobromide

(pronounced hi-o-scene)

Why has hyoscine been prescribed?

Hyoscine hydrobromide (Kwells) is used to treat travel sickness and it is also used for its side effects e.g. dry mouth. It is prescribed to relieve the symptom of excess salivation caused by antipsychotic drugs. It is not licensed in the UK for this use however this does not mean the medication is unsafe. There is a lot of experience of using hyoscine hydrobromide for hypersalivation.

What are the benefits of taking hyoscine?

It helps reduce hypersalivation.

Are there any precautions with hyoscine?

Hyoscine is suitable for most people. As with all medicines, however, there are precautions. Your prescriber will usually check that it is safe to prescribe hyoscine, but let your prescriber know if any of the following apply to you, as extra care may be needed:

- a) if you have glaucoma, epilepsy, myasthenia gravis, urinary retention, gastrointestinal obstruction, ulcerative colitis or suffer from heart, liver, kidney or prostate trouble.
- b) if you are taking any other medication especially for schizophrenia, dementia, depression or Parkinson's disease and domperidone. Also, tell your prescriber if you buy any medicine 'over the counter' from a pharmacy or supermarket. Please also tell your prescriber if you take any alternative or complementary medicine such as Chinese herbal medicines. St John's Wort should not be taken by patients prescribed hyoscine.
- c) if you are pregnant, breast feeding, or wish to become pregnant.

What is the usual dose of hyoscine?

For the tablets the usual dose is usually 300mcg up to three times daily.
For the patches the usual dose is 1 patch every 3 days.

How should hyoscine be taken?

Hyoscine is usually taken two to three times a day if you are taking tablets or every 3 days if you are using patches. However, you and your prescriber may decide that it is better for you to take the medicine another way.

What form does hyoscine come in?

Hyoscine is available as tablets and patches. The tablets are available as 300mcg and the patches as 1.5mg.

What should be done if a dose is missed?

If you forget to take a dose, take it as soon as you remember. If you miss a whole day's treatment – just carry on as normal with the usual dose on the following day. If you miss more than a day's treatment, speak to your prescriber.

What will happen when hyoscine is first taken?

Hyoscine begins to work in an hour or two. Many people do not experience any side effects. However some people may experience some side effects. We have listed potential side effects in the table below, whether or not they are likely to be short or long-term and what measures can be taken is also described. There are other possible side effects – we have listed only the most important ones. Ask your doctor, pharmacist or nurse if you are worried about anything else that you think might be a side effect. Further information on side effects is available in the official manufacturer's leaflet.

Reporting side effects

The 'Yellow Card' scheme encourages patients to report any side effects that they feel may be caused by their medication. Ask your doctor, pharmacist or nurse for the forms if you wish to report any side effects. Alternatively, telephone 0800 100 3352 or go to www.mhra.gov.uk.

Is hyoscine addictive?

Hyoscine is not addictive, but if you stop taking the medicine suddenly, you may experience unpleasant physical feelings. Symptoms can include nausea, insomnia, dizziness, diarrhoea, excess salivation and vivid dreams. Reducing the dose of hyoscine slowly may make these symptoms less severe.

What about alcohol?

It is recommended that people taking hyoscine should not drink alcohol. This is because both antimuscarinics and alcohol can cause confusion and drowsiness. This can lead to falls and accidents. However, once people are used to taking medication, then *very small amounts* of alcohol may not be harmful. It pays to be very careful, because alcohol affects people in different ways, especially when they are taking medication. Never drink alcohol and drive. Discuss any concerns you have with your doctor, pharmacist or nurse.

Is it OK to stop taking hyoscine when symptoms go away?

No. If you stop taking hyoscine, your original symptoms may return. Most people need to remain on hyoscine for several months. You should always discuss with your prescriber any plans you have to reduce or stop any of your prescribed medicines.

Are there any alternatives to hyoscine?

Yes, there are alternatives available. Although antimuscarinics have broadly similar therapeutic effects they differ slightly in the side effects they produce. There are more antimuscarinics available so most people can find one which suits them.

Summary of side effects

Side effect	Side effect
<p>Drowsiness – Common</p> <p>What can be done about it? This should wear off within a few days. Discuss with your prescriber if this persists.</p> 	<p>Dry Mouth – Common</p> <p>What can be done about it? This should wear off within a few days. Sugar-free boiled sweets, chewing gum or eating citrus fruits may help. Discuss with the prescriber if this persists.</p> 
<p>Blurred Vision – Common</p> <p>What can be done about it? This should wear off within a few days. Discuss with your prescriber if this persists. It may be necessary to switch to another medication.</p> 	<p>Constipation - Common</p> <p>What can be done about it? Eat lots of fibre – fruit and vegetables are good sources. Drink plenty of fluids. Your prescriber may prescribe a laxative.</p> 
(Other less common) Side effects	How common is it and what can be done about it?
Urinary retention (difficulty passing water)	Rare Contact your prescriber straightaway if you have any difficulty passing water.
Anxiety	Rare This should wear off within a few days. Discuss with your prescriber if this persists.
Hyperthermia (in warm weather)	Rare Wear loose fitting clothing and try to keep cool.
Dizziness	Rare This may wear off within a few days. Discuss with your prescriber if this persists.
Confusion	Very rare Tell your prescriber if you experience any changes in your thinking ability. The dose of hyoscine may need to be reduced.
Worsening of mental illness symptoms	Very rare Tell your prescriber if you experience any worsening of symptoms related to mental illness.
Tachycardia (palpitations)	Very rare Contact your prescriber if you experience palpitations.
Increase in seizures in people with epilepsy	Very rare Report immediately to your prescriber.

Very common = almost everyone affected Common = many people affected Uncommon = some people affected
Rare = few people affected Very rare = very few or no one affected

Disclaimer

This leaflet is to help you understand more about your medication. This is not an official manufacturer's Patient Information Leaflet (see <http://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/>). Remember, leaflets like this can only describe some of the effects of medication. You may also find other books or leaflets useful. If you have access to the internet you may find a lot of information there as well, but be careful, as internet based information is not always accurate. If in doubt consult your GP or a health care professional.

This leaflet has been supplied by:

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