

Antabuse

Antabuse - This medication is used to help treat alcoholism. This drug is not a cure for alcoholism and must be used in combination with supportive therapy and counseling. This medication must never be used without a person's knowledge.

Contents

- 1 Drug name
- 2 Drug Uses
- 3 How Taken
- 4 Drug Class and Mechanism
- 5 Missed Dose
- 6 Storage
- 7 Warnings Precautions
- 8 Possible Side Effects
- 9 More Information
- 10 Site:

Drug name

Antabuse (Disulfiram)

Drug Uses

This medication is used to help treat alcoholism. This drug is not a cure for alcoholism and must be used in combination with supportive therapy and counseling. This medication must never be used without a person's knowledge.

How Taken

Take this medication by mouth, usually one or two tablets daily as directed by your doctor. Tablets can be crushed or mixed with liquid if swallowing is a problem. Do not take this medication for at least 12 hours after drinking alcohol. While taking this medication, it is extremely important you avoid alcohol in all forms including beer, wine, aftershave lotions, mouthwash, colognes, liquid medications. Read labels carefully, including those of nonprescription products, and ask your pharmacist about the alcohol content if you are uncertain.

Drug Class and Mechanism

Antabuse produces a sensitivity to alcohol which results in a highly unpleasant reaction when the patient under treatment ingests even small amounts of alcohol. Antabuse blocks the oxidation of alcohol at the acetaldehyde stage. During alcohol metabolism after antabuse intake, the concentration of acetaldehyde occurring in the blood may be 5 to 10 times higher than that found during metabolism of the same amount of alcohol alone. Accumulation of acetaldehyde in the blood produces a complex of highly unpleasant symptoms referred to as the antabuse-alcohol reaction. This reaction, which is proportional to the dosage of both antabuse and alcohol, will persist as long as alcohol is being metabolized. Antabuse does not appear to influence the rate of alcohol elimination from the body.

Missed Dose

If you miss a dose of Sumycin, take it as soon as possible. If it is almost time for your next dose, skip the missed dose and go back to your regular dosing schedule. Do not take 2 doses at once.

Storage

Store this medicine at room temperature between 59 and 86 degrees F (15 and 30 degrees C) in a tightly-closed container, away from heat and light.

Warnings Precautions

Tell your doctor your medical history, especially: heart disease, liver or kidney disease, psychiatric problems, diabetes, any allergies (especially to rubber or pesticides). This medication causes an intolerance to alcohol. Drinking alcohol while on this medication can cause serious effects that can last from 30 minutes to several hours. It produces an unpleasant reaction of flushing, headache, nausea, vomiting, dizziness, sweating, pounding heart (palpitations), blurred vision or weakness when even small amounts of alcohol are ingested. These antabuse-alcohol reactions can occur up to two weeks after the medication has been stopped. Because antabuse can cause drowsiness, use caution when driving or engaging in activities requiring alertness. Antabuse should be used only when clearly needed during pregnancy. Discuss the risks and benefits with your doctor. It is not known if antabuse is excreted into breast milk. Consult your doctor before breast-feeding.

Possible Side Effects

This medication may cause headache, drowsiness, restlessness, skin rash, acne, garlic-like aftertaste, changes in vision. Inform your doctor if any of these effects persist or worsen. Unlikely to occur but report immediately: tingling hands or feet, fatigue, weakness, loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting, strong stomach pains, dark urine, yellowing of the eyes or skin. If you notice other effects not listed above, contact your doctor or pharmacist.

More Information

Do not share this medicine with others for whom it was not prescribed. Do not use this medicine for other health conditions.

If you will be taking this medicine for an extended period of time, be sure to obtain necessary refills before your supply runs out.

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