Information on HALOPERIDOL for Service Users and their Families

This leaflet provides general information about your medication. Manufacturer patient information leaflets are also provided with all medicines. If you require further information, speak to your doctor, pharmacist or nurse.

Haloperidol is also known as or Haldol® or Serenace® or Dozic®. It comes as tablets, capsules, liquid and an injection or depot injection - Haldol®.

Haloperidol is pronounced:

*Halo-perry-doll.*

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The Mersey Care Medicines Information Service¹ regularly updates this information sheet.

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**What is Haloperidol for?**
Haloperidol is part of a group of medicines called antipsychotics which are used to treat symptoms of psychosis and schizophrenia such as hearing voices, seeing, feeling or sensing things that are not there, unpleasant thoughts, feeling paranoid, feeling that other people can read your thoughts, being withdrawn or lacking in motivation. Haloperidol can also be used to treat mania, agitation, behaviour problems and also hiccups and Tourettes (tics).

**How should I take my Haloperidol?**
Before taking haloperidol, tell your doctor if:
- you are allergic to haloperidol or any of its ingredients.
- you suffer from any other conditions, especially heart disease, kidney liver, or thyroid problems, epilepsy, Parkinson’s disease, glaucoma, blood clots, stroke or tumours
- you take any other medicines including any you have bought without prescription, supplements and herbal remedies, such as strong pain killers, blood thinners, antiepileptics, antibiotics
- you are pregnant (or planning pregnancy) or breast-feeding.

Your doctor will decide how much haloperidol is right for you to take and adjust the dose to suit you. If you are taking tablets or capsules, swallow them whole with a drink of water, with or without food. If you have been prescribed an injection, your nurse will give you the correct dose. If you are taking the liquid, you will be supplied with the right measure. Ask your doctor, pharmacist or nurse if you are not sure of anything.

**Do I need any tests when taking Haloperidol?**
Your doctor may carry out some blood and urine tests and monitor your height, weight, blood pressure and pulse. You may also get a heart tracing or electrocardiogram (ECG) done to check how well your heart is working. These tests will allow the doctor to check if this medication is right for you and to monitor your treatment.

**Can I stop taking haloperidol if I feel better?**
Antipsychotics tends to be taken long term. Haloperidol helps to treat your symptoms and prevent them from returning (relapse) so it is best to continue taking it. People who take this type of medication regularly are less likely to deteriorate or have to go into hospital with severe symptoms. Discuss with your doctor how long you will need to be on this medication. If you want to stop your medication it is best to do so in discussion with your doctor, and to stop slowly so that you can be monitored for any unpleasant withdrawal effects.
What if I forget a dose of Haloperidol?
Take the missed dose as soon as possible. However, if it is almost time for the next dose, skip the missed dose and take the next dose at the usual time. Do not double the dose or take extra doses to make up. If you or anyone else has taken more haloperidol than prescribed, contact your doctor or nearest hospital. If you miss an injection, contact your nurse or doctor as soon as you remember.

When will Haloperidol start to work?
You may start to feel better in a short time but it can take several weeks or months before you notice the benefits of this medicine.

Are there any side effects?
Haloperidol can cause side effects in some people, but these may vary from person to person. Many side effects wear off over time. Known side effects are:

- stomach upset
- appetite/weight changes
- dry mouth or drooling
- constipation
- drowsiness; dizziness
- difficulty sleeping
- sexual problems, irregular periods or breast changes
- Injections can cause swelling and redness at the site of injection. Tell your nurse if this happens.

Occasionally, more serious side effects can occur. These may include:

- allergic reaction – severe itchy rash, swelling, breathing problems
- bleeding; bruising
- irregular heart beat
- eyesight problems
- yellow eyes or skin
- stroke in older people with dementia
- muscle stiffness, tremor, restlessness; unusual movements
- high fever, stiffness, sweating, unconsciousness – ‘NMS’

If you are concerned about side effects, talk to your doctor, pharmacist or nurse. If you think a medicine has caused you an unwanted side effect, please report the problem either on a Yellow Card form available from your doctor, nurse or pharmacist OR online at this website http://yellowcard.mhra.gov.uk/.
Can I take other medicines?
Other medicines may interact with haloperidol causing unwanted effects. Medicines you can buy over the counter without a prescription may interact with prescribed medicines. Always ask your doctor or pharmacist before taking any other medicines.

Can I drive?
Haloperidol can make you feel drowsy, dizzy and less alert. If you are affected in this way, do not drive or work with machinery. You may commit an offence if you drive when your condition or treatment affects your ability to drive safely. Talk to your doctor or pharmacist or contact DVLA if you are not sure.

Can I drink alcohol?
Avoid drinking alcohol while taking haloperidol. The combined effects of haloperidol and alcohol can make you feel more sleepy.

Can I get pregnant or breast feed?
Medicines can have harmful effects at any time during pregnancy. If you are pregnant, or are planning to get pregnant, you should seek advice from your doctor. Newborns whose mothers were treated with antipsychotics during pregnancy can show unusual movements and withdrawal side effects. You and your doctor or specialist will decide if the potential benefits of treatment outweigh the potential risks to the baby.
Haloperidol can pass into breast milk. If you are breast feeding, you should get your doctor’s advice.

What alternative treatments are there?
Haloperidol is an antipsychotic medication. Alternative medications include chlorpromazine, flupentixol, chlorpromazine and zuclopenthixol. Other alternatives are the ‘atypical antipsychotics’ such as amisulpride, aripiprazole, clozapine, olanzapine, quetiapine and risperidone. Your doctor or pharmacist will be able to provide you with further information about these medications.

IMPORTANT
Remember to keep medicines where children cannot see or reach them. Never share medicines with others even if their symptoms appear the same as yours.

NEVER EXCEED THE STATED DOSE OF YOUR MEDICINE