

Aldactone® 25mg Film-coated Tablets

spironolactone

Read all of this leaflet carefully before you start taking this medicine because it contains important information for you.

- Keep this leaflet. You may need to read it again.
- If you have any further questions, ask your doctor or pharmacist.
- This medicine has been prescribed for you only. Do not pass it on to others. It may harm them, even if their signs of illness are the same as yours.
- If you get any side effects, talk to your doctor or pharmacist. This includes any possible side effects not listed in this leaflet. See section 4.

What is in this leaflet:

1. What Aldactone is and what it is used for
2. What you need to know before you take Aldactone
3. How to take Aldactone
4. Possible side effects
5. How to store Aldactone
6. Contents of the pack and other information

1. What Aldactone is and what it is used for

Aldactone belongs to a group of medicines called 'diuretics' – you may know these as 'water' tablets. You may have gone to your doctor because you had swollen ankles or were short of breath. This can happen when your heart's pumping action has become weak because of too much fluid in your body. This is called 'congestive heart failure'. Pushing extra fluid around your body means your heart has to work harder. Your doctor has given you Aldactone to help you lose the extra fluid from your body. This will mean your heart has to do less work. You lose the extra fluid as urine, so you may need to go to the toilet more often while you are taking Aldactone.

Your doctor may also give you Aldactone if your blood pressure is higher than it should be. This is called 'hypertension'. High blood pressure occurs when there is increased pressure of blood within the walls of your blood vessels. By taking fluid from within your blood vessels, Aldactone reduces the pressure on the walls of the blood vessels and so lowers your blood pressure.

You can also take Aldactone for the following illnesses:

- 'Nephrotic syndrome' - a kidney disorder that causes too much fluid in your body
- 'Ascites' - too much fluid in your abdomen and 'Oedema' - accumulation of fluid beneath skin or in one or more cavities of the body that produces swelling, for example caused by cirrhosis of the liver
- 'Malignant ascites' – fluid containing cancer cells that collect in the abdomen
- 'Primary aldosteronism' - extra fluid in your body caused by too much of a hormone called 'aldosterone'.

If you have these illnesses, Aldactone will help your body to get rid of the extra fluid. You must talk to a doctor if you do not feel better or if you feel worse.

Children should only be treated under guidance of a paediatric specialist.

2. What you need to know before you take Aldactone

Do not take Aldactone:

- if you are allergic to spironolactone or any of the other ingredients of this medicine (listed in section 6)
- if you have Addison's disease (a hormone deficiency characterised by extreme weakness, loss of weight and low blood pressure)
- if you have hyperkalaemia (raised blood potassium levels) or any other conditions associated with hyperkalaemia
- if you cannot pass urine
- if you have severe kidney disease
- if you are already taking another similar use drug known as eplerenone
- if you are taking water tablets (potassium sparing diuretics) or any potassium supplements
- if you are breast feeding.

Children with moderate to severe kidney disease must not take Aldactone.

Warnings and precautions

Talk to your doctor or pharmacist before taking Aldactone:

- if you suffer from kidney disease especially children with hypertension or liver disease

- if you are an elderly patient or
- if you have difficulty passing urine, or
- if you have a disease that can result in electrolyte balance disturbance in your blood
- if you suffer from any increase or decrease of electrolytes in your blood such as potassium or sodium
- if you have severe heart failure.
- if you experience reduced kidney function or kidney failure you may have severe increases in the levels of potassium in your blood. This can affect the way your heart functions and in extreme cases this can be fatal
- if you are taking any other water tablets (diuretics) in combination with Aldactone which may cause low sodium levels (hyponatraemia) in the blood
- if you are pregnant.

Concomitant administration of Aldactone with certain medicines, potassium supplements and food rich in potassium may lead to severe hyperkalaemia (increased potassium blood level). The symptoms of severe hyperkalaemia might include muscle cramps, irregular heart rhythm, diarrhoea, nausea, dizziness or headache.

Other medicines and Aldactone

Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you are taking, have recently taken or might take any other medicines. The use of Aldactone with high potassium salt diet and salt substitutes containing potassium may lead to increased levels of potassium in your blood. Your doctor may wish to alter your dose of Aldactone if you are taking any of the following:

- ACE inhibitors, digoxin or other anti-arrhythmic medicines
- lithium, antipyrene, colestyramine, ammonium chloride or carbenoxolone
- medicines for high blood pressure including angiotensin-converting enzyme (ACE) inhibitors
- other diuretics
- non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) such as aspirin, ibuprofen or mefenamic acid
- potassium supplements
- noradrenaline
- cardiac glycosides, used in the treatment of heart failure
- regional or general anaesthesia
- anti-pyrines, used to reduce fever
- heparin (a medicine preventing blood clots forming)
- medicines known to cause hyperkalaemia (raised blood potassium levels)
- trimethoprim and trimethoprim-sulfamethoxazole

If you are going to have an operation where you will be given an anaesthetic, tell the doctor in charge that you are taking Aldactone.

Aldactone with food and drink

This medicine should be taken with food (see section 3 'How to take Aldactone').

Pregnancy, breast-feeding and fertility

If you are pregnant, think you may be pregnant or are planning to have a baby, ask your doctor or pharmacist for advice before taking this medicine.

Aldactone should not be used if you are breast-feeding. You should discuss the use of Aldactone with your doctor, who will advise you to consider an alternative method of feeding your baby while you are taking this medicine.

Driving and using machines

Take care if you drive or operate machinery. Drowsiness and dizziness have been associated with Aldactone treatment and this may affect your ability to drive or operate machinery safely.

3. How to take Aldactone

Always take this medicine exactly as your doctor or pharmacist has told you. Check with your doctor or pharmacist if you are not sure. The pharmacist's label on the pack also gives this information. The number of tablets you need to take depends on your illness. The recommended dose is once a day with food.

Use in adults

The adult dose varies from 25mg to 400mg spironolactone a day. If you are not sure how much to take, ask your doctor or pharmacist.

Use in the elderly

Your doctor will start you on a low starting dose and gradually increase the dosage as needed to obtain the desired effect.

Use in children and adolescents

If you are giving Aldactone to a child, the number of tablets you give will depend on the child's weight. Your doctor will work out the number of tablets that you should give.

If you take more Aldactone than you should

If you accidentally take too many tablets, contact your doctor or nearest hospital accident and emergency department immediately. The symptoms of an overdose are feeling drowsy, dizzy, feeling dehydrated and you may feel confused. You may also feel or be sick, suffer from diarrhoea and may have skin rashes that will appear as flat red areas of skin with overlapping small raised bumps. Changes in your blood sodium and potassium levels may leave you feeling weak and suffering from tingling, prickling or numbness of the skin and/or muscle spasms but these symptoms are unlikely to be associated with severe over dosage.

If you forget to take Aldactone

Do not take a double dose to make up for a forgotten tablet. If you forget to take your tablet, take it as soon as you remember, unless it is almost time for your next dose.

If you stop taking Aldactone

It is important to keep taking Aldactone until your doctor tells you to stop, even if you start to feel better. If you stop taking the tablets too soon, your condition may get worse. If you have any further questions on the use of this medicine, ask your doctor or pharmacist.

4. Possible side effects

Like all medicines, this medicine can cause side effects, although not everybody gets them.

Tell your doctor immediately if you experience any of the following symptoms after taking this medicine. Although they are very rare, the symptoms can be severe.

- Itchiness and blistering of the skin around the lips and the rest of the body (Stevens-Johnson syndrome)
- Detachment of the top layer of skin from the lower layers of skin, all over the body (toxic epidermal necrolysis)
- Skin rash, fever and swelling (which could be symptoms of something more serious, drug rash and eosinophilia and systemic symptoms)
- Yellow skin and eyes (jaundice; Aldactone can cause impairment of liver function)
- Irregular heartbeat that can be fatal, tingling sensation, paralysis (loss of muscle function) or difficulty in breathing; which may be symptoms of raised potassium levels in your blood. Your doctor will conduct regular blood tests to monitor potassium and other electrolyte levels. He or she may stop your treatment if necessary.

Other side effects of Aldactone

- Nausea, stomach upset, fever
- Confusion, dizziness, drowsiness, headache, feeling generally unwell
- Menstrual problems in women, temporary impotence in men
- Change in sex drive for both men and women (libido)
- Disturbances in body electrolytes such as high blood calcium
- Reduced number of cells that fight infection - white cells (leukopenia), reduced number of cells carrying oxygen (anaemia) or that help with clotting (thrombocytopenia) or increased eosinophil count in the blood (eosinophilia). This may cause you to bruise more easily or cause purple spots on the skin (purpura)
- Breast enlargement in men (gynaecomastia, this goes away when treatment is stopped), breast lumps, breast pain
- Skin rash, generalised itchiness
- Skin allergy with development of itchiness and weals (urticaria), excessive hair growth (hypertrichosis), skin condition presenting with fluid-filled blisters (pemphigoid)
- Hair loss
- General weakness or lethargy, headaches, muscle or leg cramps and problems coordinating muscle movements (ataxia)
- Kidney failure or abnormal function
- Raised potassium in the blood (hyperkalaemia).

Reporting of side effects

If you get any side effects, talk to your doctor, pharmacist or nurse. This includes any possible side effects not listed in this leaflet. You can also report side effects directly via HPRa Pharmacovigilance, Earlsfort Terrace, IRL - Dublin 2; Tel: +353 1 6764971; Fax: +353 1 6762517. Website: www.hpra.ie; E-mail: medsafety@hpra.ie. By reporting side effects you can help provide more information on the safety of this medicine.

5. How to store Aldactone

Keep this medicine out of the sight and reach of children. Do not use this medicine after the expiry date which is stated on the carton after EXP and on the blister strip also. The expiry date refers to the last day of that month.

Do not store above 30°C.

Keep blister in the outer carton in order to protect from light.

Do not throw away any medicines via wastewater or household waste.

Ask your pharmacist how to throw away medicines you no longer use.

These measures will help protect the environment.

6. Contents of the pack and other information

What Aldactone contains

- The active substance is spironolactone. Each Aldactone 25mg film-coated tablet contains 25mg of spironolactone.
- The other ingredients are calcium sulfate dihydrate, corn starch gluten-free, povidone, magnesium stearate, peppermint flavour, hydroxypropylmethylcellulose, polyethylene glycol, Opaspray M-1-7111 B (white).

What Aldactone looks like and contents of the pack

The name of your medicine is Aldactone.

The Aldactone 25mg tablets are white, film-coated tablets engraved "SEARLE 39" on one side and a scoreline on the other side. The score line is not intended for breaking the tablet.

Aldactone 25mg film-coated tablets come in blister packs of 50 or 100 tablets.

Not all pack sizes may be marketed.

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