

Ativan® 4 mg/ml solution for injection

lorazepam

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, pharmacist or nurse.
- 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, pharmacist or nurse. This includes any possible side effects not listed in this leaflet. See section 4.

What is in this leaflet

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

1. What Ativan Injection is and what it is used for

This medicine contains lorazepam, which is a member of a group of medicines called benzodiazepines. It helps to relieve anxiety and muscle tension.

Ativan Injection is usually prescribed as premedication before surgery or uncomfortable or prolonged investigations. It may also be used to relieve acute anxiety states, acute excitement or acute mania, and in the control of convulsions.

You must talk to a doctor if you do not feel better or if you feel worse.

2. What you need to know before you are given Ativan Injection

Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you have been given Ativan Injection before taking any other medicine, if you become pregnant or if you enter hospital for treatment.

You should not be given Ativan Injection:

- If you have severe breathing or chest problems
- If you have been prescribed benzodiazepines before and found them to be unsuitable
- If you are allergic to benzodiazepines, including lorazepam or any of the other ingredients of this medicine (listed in section 6)
- If you have 'myasthenia gravis' (very weak or tired muscles)
- If you have serious liver problems
- If you suffer from 'sleep apnoea' (breathing problems when you are asleep)
- If you are an out-patient unless you have somebody to take you home.

Warnings and precautions

Talk to your doctor, pharmacist or nurse before using Ativan Injection:

- If you are pregnant, trying to become pregnant or are breast feeding
- If you are a drug user or heavy drinker
- If you have any kidney or liver problems
- If you are elderly or debilitated (weak)
- If you are suffering or have suffered from depression
- If you have a personality disorder
- If you have a history of psychotic illness
- If you have a history of convulsions/seizures
- If you suffer from breathing problems
- If you suffer from eye problems such as glaucoma
- If you are taking any other medicines, since they may affect the way Ativan Injection works. Ativan Injection may also affect the way other drugs work.

Tolerance and dependence

Tolerance to benzodiazepines may occur. Therefore the beneficial effect of Ativan may be less apparent after several weeks of use.

Lorazepam may have abuse potential, especially in patients with a history of drug and/or alcohol abuse.

Dependence is unlikely to occur but the risk increases with higher doses and longer-term use and is further increased in patients with a history of alcoholism, drug abuse or in patients with personality disorders. Therefore use in individuals with a history of alcoholism or drug abuse should be avoided.

Dependence may lead to withdrawal symptoms, especially if treatment is discontinued abruptly. Therefore, the drug should always be discontinued gradually – using the oral preparation if necessary.

Some people feel sleepy after receiving Ativan Injection. Therefore, you may need to stay in hospital for at least 8 hours, or overnight, after receiving your injection. If you are to leave hospital shortly after receiving Ativan Injection you should have someone with you.

Some elderly patients may feel dizzy after receiving Ativan Injection and may be in danger of falling.

Transient memory loss has been reported following administration of benzodiazepines.

Other medicines and Ativan Injection

Tell your doctor, pharmacist or nurse if you are taking, have recently taken or might take any other medicines.

In particular, you should tell your doctor if you are taking any other sedative, anti-anxiety drugs, antidepressants, strong pain killers (e.g. opioids, methadone - keep the dosages and duration of both medicines to a minimum as recommended by your doctor), drugs for epilepsy, antihistamines, drugs for mood or mental disorders (e.g. haloperidol or chlorpromazine). Taking Ativan with these pain killers may make you more sleepy and in rare cases can cause breathing difficulty and death. Barbiturates (sedatives) and anaesthetics (drugs that cause anaesthesia - reversible loss of sensation), clozapine (drugs for mood or mental disorders), sodium valproate (used in the treatment of epilepsy and bipolar disorder), probenecid (drugs used for gout), theophylline, aminophylline (drugs for respiratory diseases), disulfiram (drug used to support the treatment of chronic alcoholism) and metronidazole (an antibiotic). The dose of these drugs may need to be reduced before you are given Ativan Injection. You should also tell your doctor if you are taking a drug called scopolamine which may be used for gut problems or before an operation.

Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you have been given Ativan Injection before taking any other medicine, if you become pregnant or if you enter hospital for treatment.

Ativan Injection with food, drink and alcohol

You should avoid alcohol for at least 24 to 48 hours after receiving Ativan Injection. Please refer to section 3.

Pregnancy and breast-feeding

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

Benzodiazepines, including Ativan, may cause damage to the foetus if given during early pregnancy. Therefore, if you are pregnant or might become pregnant you should not be given this medicine without consulting your doctor. If you receive this medicine during late pregnancy or during labour, your baby, when born, may be less active than other babies, have a low body temperature, be floppy or have breathing or feeding difficulties for a while. Your baby's response to the cold might be temporarily impaired also. If this medicine is given regularly in late pregnancy, your baby may develop withdrawal symptoms after birth.

Ativan should not be given to breastfeeding mothers unless the expected benefit to the mother outweighs the potential risk to the infant, as the drug may pass into breast milk.

Driving and using machines

Some people feel sleepy or dizzy during the day when taking Ativan. Do not drive or use machinery within 24 to 48 hours of receiving Ativan Injection.

If you are an out-patient you should not be given Ativan Injection unless you have somebody to take you home.

Ativan Injection contains polyethylene glycol, benzyl alcohol and propylene glycol.

Toxic effects (including convulsions/fits) caused by the ingredients contained in Ativan Injection (polyethylene glycol and propylene glycol) have been reported following very high doses of Ativan Injection. Those prone to a build up of propylene glycol in the body and its potential side effects include children less than 4 years of age, pregnant women, those with severe kidney or liver disease, and those treated with disulfiram (drug used to support the treatment of chronic alcoholism) or metronidazole (an antibiotic).

Each ml of Ativan Injection contains 0.02 ml of benzyl alcohol and should not be used in pre-term or full-term neonates unless strictly necessary. This preservative has been associated with serious adverse events in paediatric patients.

3. How to take Ativan Injection

Your doctor will give you Ativan Injection by injecting it into one of your veins or into one of your muscles.

The recommended dose is:

For pre-medication, you will normally be given 0.05 mg of Ativan for each kilogram that you weigh (e.g. if you weigh 70 kilograms you will probably receive 3.5 mg of Ativan). Ativan Injection is not recommended for the treatment of pre-medication in children under 12 years of age.

For acute anxiety, the usual dose is 0.025 to 0.03 mg for each kilogram that you weigh (e.g. if you weigh 70 kilograms you will probably receive 1.75 to 2.1 mg of Ativan). Ativan Injection is not recommended for the treatment of acute anxiety in children under 12 years of age.

Your doctor may prescribe a different dose or length of treatment, especially if you are an elderly or debilitated (weak) patient.

Patients with Renal or Hepatic Impairment: Lower doses may be sufficient in these patients. Use in patients with severe hepatic insufficiency is contraindicated.

When Ativan Injection is used to control status epilepticus a dose of 4 mg is given intravenously to adults. For children over 3 years of age, the dose is usually 2 mg given intravenously.

Dependence on benzodiazepines may occur following prolonged treatment. Therefore Ativan is usually prescribed for one or two doses, or for a short course of treatment. This reduces the risk of becoming dependent on Ativan, or suffering unpleasant effects when you stop taking it. (See 'If you stop using Ativan Injection', below).

You will be prescribed the lowest effective dose for the shortest possible time.

If Ativan Injection is given at doses that are much higher than those above, unwanted effects such as those shown in "Section 4 Possible side effects" may be more likely. Tell your doctor if you experience any of these effects or any other unwanted effects.

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Instructions for use:

Ativan ampoules are equipped with the OPC (One Point Cut) opening system and must be opened using the following instructions:

- hold with one hand the bottom part of the ampoule
- Put the other hand on the top of the ampoule positioning the thumb above the coloured point and press

If you stop using Ativan Injection

After you have finished your prescribed treatment with Ativan Injection, your doctor will decide whether or not you need further treatment.

Following a course of treatment, your dose of Ativan Injection may be reduced slowly. This allows your body to get used to being without Ativan and reduces the risk of unpleasant effects.

Withdrawal symptoms

On stopping Ativan, you may experience withdrawal symptoms such as headaches, muscle pain, anxiety, tension, depression, restlessness, dizziness, nausea, diarrhoea, loss of appetite, insomnia, confusion, irritability, agitation, shaking, stomach pain, changes in heart rate, short-term memory loss, dysphoria (feelings of sadness (depressed mood), anxiety, irritability, or restlessness), high body temperature and sweating. If these symptoms do occur, they do not usually last for long. If you suffer from any of these symptoms, ask your doctor for advice.

If you suffer from any of the following withdrawal symptoms: loss of the sense of reality, feeling unreal or detached from life and unable to feel emotion, tinnitus (ringing sounds in your ears), numbness or tingling of your arms or legs, vomiting, twitching, hallucinations, convulsions, or effects on sight, hearing or touch, ask your doctor for advice immediately.

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.

Severe allergic reactions can occur with benzodiazepine use, even after the first dose. Symptoms include swelling of the tongue or throat, shortness of breath, throat closing, nausea or vomiting. In such cases, immediate medical attention should be sought.

Benzodiazepines, including lorazepam, may lead to potentially fatal breathing problems.

Occasionally, you may have unwanted effects whilst taking Ativan Injection. These are usually not serious and do not last long. However, you should tell your doctor if any of the following symptoms are severe or become troublesome:

Other side effects that may occur are:

Very common :may affect more than 1 in 10 people

- sedation
- fatigue
- drowsiness

Common :may affect up to 1 in 10 people

- muscle weakness
- asthenia (loss of strength)
- ataxia (poor muscle control)
- confusion
- depression
- unmasking of depression (revealing signs of depression that were previously hidden)
- dizziness

Uncommon: may affect up to 1 in 100 people

- nausea
- change in libido
- impotence
- decreased orgasm

Not known: frequency cannot be estimated from the available data

- increased sensitivity to light, sound and touch
- convulsions/fits
- constipation, yellowing of the skin and eyes
- shaking
- problems with vision (double and blurred vision)
- slurred speech
- headache
- memory loss
- heightened emotions
- coma
- thoughts or attempts of suicide
- impaired attention/concentration
- loss of inhibitions
- increase in specific liver enzymes (bilirubin, liver transaminases and alkaline phosphatase)
- anxiety, excitation, hostility, aggression, sexual arousal
- balance disorder
- difficulty breathing
- difficulty breathing when you are asleep
- worsening of lung disease
- allergic skin reactions (e.g. rash, swelling)
- alopecia (loss of hair from the head or body)
- hypersensitivity reactions
- angioedema (swelling of the face, hands and feet)
- SIADH - syndrome of inappropriate antidiuretic hormone hypersecretion (a condition in which the body produces too much antidiuretic hormone (ADH). Increased ADH may cause too much water to remain inside your body.)
- hyponatremia (low level of sodium in the blood which can cause tiredness and confusion, muscle twitching, fits and coma)

- hypothermia
- lowering of blood pressure
- thrombocytopenia (unexplained bruising, nosebleeds and/or bleeding gums), agranulocytosis (severe infection), pancytopenia (bleeding, bruising easily, fatigue, shortness of breath, and weakness)
- vertigo
- problems sleeping

The following side effects may be more likely to occur in children and elderly patients:

- restlessness
- agitation
- irritability
- aggressiveness
- violent anger
- nightmares
- hallucinations
- personality changes
- abnormal behaviour
- false beliefs

On rare occasions people notice pain, inflammation of the skin or rash at the injection site. Tell your doctor immediately if this happens to you.

If any of the side effects gets serious, or if you notice any side effects not listed in this leaflet, please tell your doctor.

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 HPRP 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 Ativan Injection

Keep this medicine out of the sight and reach of children. It could harm them.

Do not use this medicine after the expiry date, which is stated on the carton and ampoule label after EXP. The expiry date refers to the last day of that month.

Ativan Injection should be stored in a refrigerator between 2°C and 8°C and kept in the outer carton 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 Ativan Injection contains

The active ingredient in Ativan Injection is lorazepam and there are 4 mg of lorazepam in each 1 ml of the solution for injection.

Ativan Injection also contains polyethylene glycol, benzyl alcohol and propylene glycol (see section 2 "Ativan Injection contains polyethylene glycol and propylene glycol").

What Ativan Injection looks like and the contents of the pack

Ativan Injection is a clear colourless solution supplied in small clear glass bottles (called ampoules) and each ampoule contains 1 ml of Ativan Injection.

Ativan Injection is supplied in packs of 10 ampoules.

Do not use if solution has developed a colour or precipitate.

Not all pack sizes may be marketed.

Marketing Authorisation Holder

Pfizer Healthcare Ireland
9 Riverwalk
National Digital Park
Citywest Business Campus
Dublin 24
Ireland

Manufacturer

Haupt Pharma Livron
1 rue Comte de Sinaré
26 250 Livron Sur Drome
France

Company Contact Address:

For further information on this medicine, please contact Medical Information at Pfizer Healthcare Ireland, 9 Riverwalk, National Digital Park, Citywest Business Campus, Dublin 24, Ireland
Telephone 1800 633 363

Date leaflet last revised: mm/yyyy

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The following information is intended for healthcare professionals only:

Posology and method of administration

Posology:

Dosage and duration of therapy should be individualised. The lowest effective dose should be prescribed for the shortest time possible. The risk of withdrawal and rebound phenomena is greater after abrupt discontinuation; therefore, the drug should be discontinued gradually in all patients.

Method of administration:

Ativan Injection can be given intravenously or intramuscularly. However, the intravenous route is to be preferred. Care should be taken to avoid injection into small veins and intra-arterial injection.

Absorption from the injection site is considerably slower if the intramuscular route is used and as rapid an effect may be obtained by oral administration of Ativan tablets. Ativan should not be used for long-term chronic treatment.

Preparation of the injection

Intramuscular administration:

A 1:1 dilution of Ativan Injection with normal saline or Sterile Water for Injection BP is recommended in order to facilitate intramuscular administration.

Intravenous administration:

For intravenous administration, Ativan Injection should always be diluted with saline or Sterile Water for Injection BP as a 1:1 dilution.

Ativan Injection is presented as a 1 ml solution in a 2 ml ampoule to facilitate dilution. Ativan Injection should not be mixed with other drugs in the same syringe.

Dosage:

Premedication:

Adults: 0.05 mg/kg (3.5 mg for an average 70 kg man). By the intravenous route the injection should be given 30-45 minutes before surgery when sedation will be evident after 5-10 minutes and maximal loss of recall will occur after 30-45 minutes.

By the intramuscular route the injection should be given 1-1½ hours before surgery when sedation will be evident after 30-45 minutes and maximal loss of recall will occur after 60-90 minutes.

Paediatric population: Ativan Injection is not recommended in children under 12 years.

Acute Anxiety:

Adults: 0.025-0.03 mg/kg (1.75-2.1 mg for an average 70 kg man). Repeat 6 hourly.

Paediatric population: Ativan Injection is not recommended in children under 12 years.

Status epilepticus:

Adults: 4 mg intravenously

Paediatric population: 2 mg intravenously

Elderly and debilitated patients: Elderly and debilitated patients may respond to lower doses and half the normal adult dose may be sufficient.

Patients with Renal or Hepatic Impairment:

Lower doses may be sufficient in patients with impaired renal function or with mild to moderate hepatic insufficiency. Use in patients with severe hepatic insufficiency is contraindicated.

Incompatibilities

In the absence of compatibility studies this medicinal product must not be mixed with other medicinal products other than those mentioned in Posology and method of administration.

Shelf life

Unopened: 15 months

After opening: Use immediately after opening

After dilution: Use immediately after dilution

Special precautions for storage

Store in a refrigerator between 2°C and 8°C.

Keep in the outer carton to protect from light.

Special precautions for disposal and other handling

Ativan Injection should not be mixed with other drugs in the same syringe. Do not use if solution has developed a colour or precipitate. (see "Posology and method of administration")

No special requirements for disposal.

Any unused medicinal product or waste material should be disposed of in accordance with local requirements.