

METHADONE

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If you have severe, around the clock pain, you may be prescribed Methadone. Methadone is a high alert medication, which means if you do not take it exactly as prescribed it may cause illness or injury.

To understand how Methadone works, let's look at how pain affects your body.

Thousands of tiny nerve cells in your body sense many feelings, like cold, heat, pressure, and pain. When your body is injured, the tiny nerve cells send a message to your brain that says: 'I'm in pain here!'

Methadone works in the brain to change how your body feels and responds to pain.

Methadone comes in a tablet. Your healthcare provider will decide how much you need to take but dosages range from 5 milligrams to 10 milligrams. Make sure you understand exactly what you are taking and how you are supposed to take it to avoid injury.

Methadone is a powerful medication. Some people should not take it.

Do not take Methadone if you have asthma or other breathing problems, or a blockage in your stomach or intestines.

If you are pregnant, planning to get pregnant, or breastfeeding, talk to your healthcare provider before taking Methadone. It may harm your baby.

Before taking Methadone, tell your healthcare provider if you have a history of: head injury, seizures, liver, kidney or thyroid problems, problems urinating, heart rhythm abnormalities, and pancreas or gallbladder problems.

Methadone can be highly addictive. If you have a history of abuse of street drugs, prescription medications or alcohol, tell your healthcare provider. There may be a different medication available for you.

Some side effects of Methadone include: constipation, stomach pain, nausea, vomiting, headache, sleepiness, and dizziness. If you do notice any of these side effects contact your healthcare provider about how to manage them.

Be aware that you are at an increased risk of falling while taking Methadone. Get up from a sitting or lying position slowly.

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Do not drive or operate heavy machinery, including your car, until you know how Methadone affects you.

Do not drink alcohol while taking Methadone. Drinking alcohol while taking this medication can cause serious side effects leading to death.

If you have an allergic reaction like: trouble breathing, hives, or swelling of your face or throat; call 911.

If you have: shortness of breath, fast heartbeat, chest pain, extreme tiredness, or feel like you may pass out; call your healthcare provider right away.

This is not the complete list of side effects. Make sure you discuss all possible side effects with your healthcare provider.

Take Methadone exactly as prescribed. Do not change your dose or take it for longer than prescribed.

Methadone should be taken at the same time every day. If you miss a dose, take it as soon as you remember. Do not double dose to make up for a missed dose. Return to your normal medication schedule as soon as possible.

Methadone is not used for pain that comes and goes. If you are still in pain while taking Methadone, talk to your healthcare provider.

If you think you have taken too much Methadone, call 911. An overdose of Methadone can cause serious breathing problems that can lead to death.

Store Methadone away from moisture and direct sunlight. Your bathroom medicine cabinet is not the best place because of moisture. Do not leave your medication where it can get too hot or too cold.

Always store your medication out of sight and out of reach of children to prevent accidents.

Because Methadone is a narcotic that can cause dependency, it can be a very desirable drug to addicts. Lock this medication up to prevent stealing and abuse.

When you are done taking Methadone, crush all of your remaining tablets and mix them with undesirable trash like kitty litter or coffee grounds.

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Do not sell or give your Methadone to anyone else. It is against the law and can seriously harm anyone else taking it. Contact your local police station for more information on proper disposal directions.

Methadone can help relieve your pain. But it is a powerful medication that should only be taken exactly as prescribed. If you have any questions about Methadone, ask your healthcare provider and pharmacist for more information.