



Zuclophenthixol Decanoate Injection

(Pronounced zoo-clo-pen-tix-ol)

(Also known as Clopixol)

Why has zuclophenthixol decanoate been prescribed?

Zuclophenthixol decanoate is an antipsychotic used to treat schizophrenia and other similar conditions.

What are the benefits of taking zuclophenthixol decanoate?

Antipsychotics are effective in reducing the symptoms of psychosis. They also shorten the time to recovery and help prevent relapses. The main advantage of a long-acting injection (or depot) is that there is no need to remember to take tablets daily. There is also less fluctuation in the amount of the drug in the body and as such side effects may be less severe than with the tablets or oral formulations.

Are there any precautions with zuclophenthixol decanoate?

Zuclophenthixol decanoate is suitable for most people. As with all medicines, however, there are precautions. Your doctor will usually check that it is safe to prescribe zuclophenthixol decanoate, but let your doctor know if any of the following apply to you, as extra care may be needed.

- If you suffer from liver, kidney, thyroid, heart, prostate or breathing problems or if you suffer from glaucoma, diabetes or phaeochromocytoma.
- If you are taking any other medication, especially antidepressants, anticonvulsants, antibiotics, blood pressure tablets and medicines asthma and for Parkinson's Disease. Also, tell your doctor if you buy any medicine 'over the counter' from a pharmacy or supermarket. Please also tell your doctor if you take any alternative or complementary medicine such as Chinese herbal medicines.
- If you are pregnant, breast feeding, or wish to become pregnant.

What is the usual dose of zuclophenthixol decanoate?

The initial dose is usually 100mg. The usual dose can vary from 200mg to 500mg once a week but some people may need up to 600mg a week. Zuclophenthixol decanoate can be given at intervals of one to four weeks. It may take a few months to get to the dose that is most suitable.

How should zuclophenthixol decanoate be taken?

A small dose is injected to test how your body responds. You will then be given a regular intramuscular injection which is administered into the muscle in the thigh or bottom.

What form does zuclophenthixol decanoate come in?

Zuclophenthixol decanoate is available as strengths of 200mg per ml in a 1ml ampoule and 500mg per ml in a 1ml ampoule size. Zuclophenthixol is also available as a short acting injection called zuclophenthixol acetate (also know as Clopixol Acuphase) and zuclophenthixol tablets are also available.

What should be done if a dose is missed?

The next injection should be given as soon as possible. This may mean making an extra appointment at the clinic or hospital.

What will happen when zuclophenthixol decanoate is first taken?

Zuclophenthixol decanoate, like many medicines, does not work straight away. For example, it may take several days or even weeks for some symptoms to improve. You may remain on antipsychotic tablets for some weeks after the injection is first given. This is because the injection is released slowly into your body and takes some weeks to be effective. Many people do not experience any side effects. However some people may experience some side effects. We have listed potential side effects in the table below, whether or not they are likely to be short or long-term and what measures can be taken is also described. There are other possible side effects – we have listed only the most important ones. Ask your doctor, pharmacist or nurse if you are worried about anything else that you think might be a side effect. Further information on side effects is available in the official manufacturer's leaflet.

Reporting side effects

The 'Yellow Card' scheme encourages patients to report any side effects that they feel may be caused by their medication. Ask your doctor, pharmacist, or nurse for the forms if you wish to report any side effects. Alternatively, telephone 0800 100 3352 or go to www.mhra.gov.uk.

Is zuclophenthixol decanoate addictive?

No, zuclophenthixol decanoate is not addictive. However, if you stop receiving the medicine suddenly, you may experience unpleasant physical feelings.

What about alcohol?

It is recommended that people receiving zuclophenthixol decanoate should not drink alcohol. This is because both antipsychotics and alcohol can cause drowsiness. If the two are taken together, severe drowsiness can result. This can lead to falls and accidents. As well as this, drinking alcohol may make psychosis worse. However, once people are used to receiving medication, then *very small amounts* of alcohol may not be harmful. It pays to be very careful, because alcohol affects people in different ways, especially when they are receiving medication. Never drink alcohol and drive. Discuss any concerns you may have with your doctor, pharmacist or nurse.

Is it OK to stop taking zuclophenthixol decanoate when symptoms go away?

No. If you stop receiving zuclophenthixol decanoate your original symptoms are very likely to return. Most people need to be on zuclophenthixol decanoate for quite a long time, sometimes years. You should always discuss any plans you have to reduce or stop any of your prescribed medicines with your doctor.

Are there any alternatives to zuclophenthixol decanoate?

Yes, there are alternatives available. Overall, antipsychotics have broadly similar therapeutic effects, except for clozapine which is effective when other antipsychotics have failed. Antipsychotics differ in their side effects. With the range of medicines now available, a suitable and acceptable antipsychotic can usually be found for everyone.

Summary of side effects



Movement disorders – Common trembling, muscle spasms

What can be done about it?

Another medicine may be prescribed to treat this. Treatment may be switched to another medicine which does not cause this side effect.



Menstrual changes – Common periods may stop (women)

What can be done about it?

Any changes should be reported to the prescriber. Treatment may be switched to another medicine which does not cause this side effect.

Other (less common) side effects	How common is it and what can be done about it?
Dry mouth	Uncommon This tends to wear off. Sugar-free boiled sweets, chewing gum or eating citrus fruits may help. If this persists report it to your prescriber.
Constipation	Uncommon Eat lots of fibre - fruit and vegetables are good sources. Drink plenty of fluids. Your prescriber may prescribe a laxative.
Sexual dysfunction (reduced libido (desire) and lack of orgasm in males and females. Impotence in males).	Uncommon Any changes should be reported to your prescriber. It may be necessary to switch to another medication. Symptoms should go away when switched to another medication.
Breast growth and milk production (men and women)	Uncommon Any changes should be reported to your prescriber. Treatment may be switched to another medicine which does not cause this side effect
Drowsiness	Uncommon This tends to wear off over time. If this persists tell your doctor.
Depression or anxiety	Uncommon This tends to wear off over time. If this persists tell your doctor.
Insomnia	Uncommon This tends to wear off over time. If this persists tell your doctor.
Abnormal movements (also known as tardive dyskinesia)	Rare This occurs only after long term treatment. It usually begins with unusual movements of the mouth and tongue. Treatment may be switched to another medicine which is less likely to cause this side

	effect. Symptoms may go away when switched to another medicine.
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Very common = almost everyone affected
Common = many people affected
Uncommon = some people affected

Rare = few people affected
Very rare = very few or no one affected

Disclaimer

This leaflet does not replace the official manufacturer's Patient Information Leaflet.

For more information, visit www.slam.nhs.uk/meds or speak to a health care professional.

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