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## Dronedarone tablets (Multaq)

Dronedarone is given to maintain a regular heart rhythm after cardioversion. Treatment with it will be started by a heart specialist.

The usual dose is one tablet twice daily. Take the tablets during breakfast and your evening meal.

Dronedarone can cause a number of side-effects which your doctor will discuss with you before you start treatment. If you develop any signs of liver damage or heart failure, you must let your doctor know straightaway.

### About dronedarone

Type of medicine	An anti-arrhythmic medicine
Used for	Atrial fibrillation (irregular heartbeats)
Also called	Multaq®
Available as	Tablets

Dronedarone is prescribed for people with an [irregular heart rhythm called atrial fibrillation \(AF\)](#). AF happens when the normal controlling timer in the heart (that causes it to beat regularly) is overridden. This causes parts of the heart to beat very rapidly, and other parts to beat haphazardly. A treatment called cardioversion is a way of converting the irregular rhythm back to a normal regular rhythm. Dronedarone is prescribed to maintain the regular heart rhythm after cardioversion. It will be prescribed by a specialist doctor.

## Before taking dronedarone

Some medicines are not suitable for people with certain conditions, and sometimes a medicine may only be used if extra care is taken. For these reasons, before you start taking dronedarone it is important that your doctor knows:

- If you are pregnant, trying for a baby, or breastfeeding.
- If you have any problems with the way your liver works or with the way your kidneys work.
- If you have any other heart conditions.
- If you have ever had an allergic reaction to a medicine. It is particularly important that you tell your doctor if you have taken a medicine called amiodarone and had problems with your breathing as a result. Also let your doctor know if you are taking anticoagulant medicines like apixaban or rivaroxaban.
- If you are taking any other medicines. This includes any medicines you are taking which are available to buy without a prescription, as well as herbal and complementary medicines.

## How to take dronedarone tablets

- Before you start this treatment, read the manufacturer's printed information leaflet from inside your pack. The manufacturer's leaflet will give you more information about dronedarone and a full list of side-effects which you may experience from taking it.
- Take dronedarone exactly as your doctor tells you to. It is usually taken twice daily, the first dose in the morning during breakfast and the second dose during the evening meal. Swallow the tablets with a drink of water.
- If you forget to take a dose, take it (with something to eat) as soon as you remember. If when you remember, it is nearly time for your next dose then leave out the missed dose and take your next dose when it is due. Do not take two doses together to make up for a forgotten dose.

## Getting the most from your treatment

- Try to keep your regular appointments with your doctor. This is so your doctor can check your heart rhythm and monitor your progress. Your doctor will also want to do some blood tests while you are on dronedarone to check your liver function.
- Do not drink grapefruit juice while you are on dronedarone. This is because a chemical in grapefruit juice increases the amount of dronedarone in your bloodstream and increases the risk of side-effects.
- Treatment with dronedarone can be long-term. You should continue to take the tablets unless you are advised otherwise.
- If you are having an operation or dental treatment, tell the person carrying out the treatment that you are taking dronedarone.
- If you buy any medicines, always check with a pharmacist that they are suitable to take with dronedarone. This is because a number of medicines can interfere with dronedarone.

## Can dronedarone tablets cause problems?

Along with their useful effects, most medicines can cause unwanted side-effects although not everyone experiences them. The table below contains some of the most common ones associated with dronedarone. You will find a full list in the manufacturer's information leaflet supplied with your medicine. The unwanted effects often improve as your body adjusts to the new medicine, but speak with your doctor or pharmacist if any of the following continue or become troublesome.

Common dronedarone side-effects (these affect fewer than 1 in 10 people)	What can I do if I experience this?
Feeling sick (nausea), indigestion, tummy (abdominal) pain	Eat simple meals - avoid rich or spicy food
Diarrhoea	Drink plenty of water to replace lost fluids
Feeling tired	Do not drive and do not use tools or machines until you feel more awake

**Important:** dronedarone is associated with a number of serious unwanted effects affecting the heart and liver. You must let your doctor know **straightaway** if you notice any of the following:

- An increase in weight, trouble breathing or feeling short of breath, swollen feet or legs. These could be signs of heart failure.
- Extreme tiredness, abdominal pain, high temperature, sickness, itchy skin, dark urine or yellowing of your skin or of the whites of your eyes (jaundice). These could be signs of damage to your liver.

If you experience any other symptoms which you think may be due to the medicine, speak with your doctor or pharmacist.

## How to store dronedarone

- Keep all medicines out of the reach and sight of children.
- Store in a cool, dry place, away from direct heat and light.

# Important information about all medicines

Never take more than the prescribed dose. If you suspect that you or someone else might have taken an overdose of this medicine, go to the accident and emergency department of your local hospital. Take the container with you, even if it is empty.

This medicine is for you. Never give it to other people even if their condition appears to be the same as yours.

Do not keep out-of-date or unwanted medicines. Take them to your local pharmacy which will dispose of them for you.

If you have any questions about this medicine ask your pharmacist.

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If you experience side effects, you can report them online through the [Yellow Card website](#).

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## Further reading

- [Manufacturer's PIL, Multaq® 400 mg tablets](#); Sanofi, The electronic Medicines Compendium. Dated July 2022.
- [Medicines Complete BNF 87th Edition](#); British Medical Association and Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain, London.

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