

Hydroxyzine (Vistaril): Important Patient Information

What is Hydroxyzine?

Hydroxyzine is an antihistamine used to treat anxiety, nausea, vomiting, allergies, and insomnia. It may also be used as a sedative before medical procedures. Hydroxyzine works by blocking histamine, a substance in the body that causes allergic symptoms, and it has sedative properties that affect the central nervous system.

Special Precautions Before Taking Hydroxyzine

Before taking hydroxyzine, inform your healthcare provider of the following:

- **Allergies:** If you are allergic to hydroxyzine, cetirizine (Zyrtec), levocetirizine (Xyzal), or any ingredients in hydroxyzine preparations.
 - **Current Medications & Supplements:** Provide a complete list of prescription and nonprescription medications, vitamins, and supplements you are taking.
 - **Heart Conditions:** Inform your doctor if you or a family member have a history of prolonged QT interval, irregular heartbeat, low potassium or magnesium levels, heart failure, heart attack, or other heart diseases.
 - **Pregnancy & Breastfeeding:** Hydroxyzine should not be taken during pregnancy or while breastfeeding.
 - **Elderly Considerations:** Adults 65 years or older should avoid hydroxyzine due to an increased risk of side effects.
 - **Drowsiness Warning:** This medication may cause drowsiness; avoid driving or operating machinery until you understand how it affects you.
 - **Alcohol Use:** Alcohol can worsen side effects such as drowsiness and dizziness. Consult your doctor about alcohol use while taking this medication.
-

Potential Side Effects of Hydroxyzine

Hydroxyzine may cause side effects. Notify your doctor if any of these symptoms persist or worsen:

Common Side Effects:

- Dry mouth
- Constipation (especially in older adults)
- Confusion (especially in older adults)
- Dizziness

- Headache

Serious Side Effects (Seek Immediate Medical Attention):

- Unintentional trembling or shaking movements
- Seizures
- Rash
- Pus-filled, blister-like sores, areas of swelling and redness on the skin, and fever

If you experience unusual symptoms, contact your doctor. Serious side effects can be reported to the FDA's MedWatch program online (<https://www.fda.gov/Safety/MedWatch>) or by calling 1-800-332-1088.

Drug & Supplement Interactions

Hydroxyzine can interact with various medications and supplements, increasing the risk of side effects. Inform your doctor if you are taking any of the following:

Medications That May Increase Risk:

- **Sedatives & Sleep Aids:** Benzodiazepines (e.g., Xanax, Valium), zolpidem (Ambien), or other sleep medications can increase drowsiness and dizziness.
- **Opioids & Pain Relievers:** Medications like oxycodone, hydrocodone, and tramadol may enhance sedative effects.
- **Antidepressants & Antipsychotics:** Drugs such as fluoxetine (Prozac), sertraline (Zoloft), quetiapine (Seroquel), and amitriptyline can increase the risk of heart rhythm issues.
- **Muscle Relaxants:** Cyclobenzaprine (Flexeril) and baclofen can cause excessive sedation.
- **Antihistamines:** Combining with other antihistamines like diphenhydramine (Benadryl) can heighten drowsiness and dry mouth.
- **Heart Medications:** Hydroxyzine can interact with drugs that affect heart rhythm, such as amiodarone or sotalol.

Common Supplement Interactions:

- **Melatonin:** May increase sedation.
- **Magnesium & Potassium Supplements:** Important for heart rhythm; imbalances may increase the risk of QT prolongation.
- **St. John's Wort:** Can affect how hydroxyzine is metabolized, altering its effectiveness.
- **Kava & Valerian Root:** These herbal supplements may amplify sedative effects.

Always consult your doctor before starting or stopping any medications or supplements while taking hydroxyzine.

Important Safety Information

- **Do Not Exceed Recommended Dose:** Taking more than prescribed can lead to excessive sedation, breathing difficulties, or serious side effects.
 - **Risk of Dependence:** Although hydroxyzine is not a controlled substance, misuse can lead to dependence when used improperly.
 - **Avoid Alcohol & CNS Depressants:** These substances can worsen drowsiness and impair cognitive function.
 - **Elderly & Fall Risk:** Increased risk of falls due to dizziness and confusion.
-

In Case of Emergency or Overdose

If an overdose occurs, contact the **Poison Control Helpline at 1-800-222-1222** or visit [Poison Help](#). If the individual has collapsed, had a seizure, has trouble breathing, or is unresponsive, call **911 immediately**.

Symptoms of Overdose:

- Severe sedation or drowsiness
- Dizziness
- Seizures
- Nausea or vomiting