

IRBESARTAN

Brand name Aprovel

Used in the following combined preparation CoAprovel

GENERAL INFORMATION

Irbesartan is a member of the group of vasodilator drugs (drugs that widen blood vessels) called angiotensin II blockers (p.56) and is used to treat hypertension (high blood pressure). It is also used to protect the kidneys in people with Type 2 diabetes who have hypertension and impaired kidney function.

Unlike ACE inhibitors, irbesartan does not cause a persistent dry cough. Irbesartan is also available in combination with a diuretic (CoAprovel), which may increase its blood-pressure-lowering effect.

QUICK REFERENCE

Drug group Vasodilator (p.56) and antihypertensive drug (p.60)

Overdose danger rating Medium

Dependence rating Low

Prescription needed Yes

Available as generic No

INFORMATION FOR USERS

Your drug prescription is tailored for you. Do not alter dosage without checking with your doctor.

How taken/used



Tablets.

Frequency and timing of doses

Once daily.

Adult dosage range

150mg (maintenance dose), increased to 300mg if needed; 75mg may be used in people over 75 years and those on haemodialysis.

Onset of effect

Within 1 hour. Blood pressure is lowered within 1–2 weeks, and maximum beneficial effect occurs 4–6 weeks from start of treatment.

Duration of action

24 hours.

Diet advice

None.

Storage

Keep in original container at room temperature out of the reach of children.

Missed dose

Take as soon as you remember. If your next dose is due within 8 hours, take a single dose now and skip the next.

Stopping the drug

Do not stop the drug without consulting your doctor. Stopping the drug may lead to worsening of the underlying condition.

Exceeding the dose

An occasional unintentional extra dose is unlikely to be a cause for concern. Large overdoses may cause dizziness, fainting, and a faint pulse or slow heart rate. Notify your doctor.

SPECIAL PRECAUTIONS

Be sure to tell your doctor if:

- You have heart problems, including heart failure.
- You have kidney problems or stenosis of the kidney's arteries.
- You have lactose/galactose intolerance or glucose/galactose malabsorption.
- You are taking other medicines.



Pregnancy

Not prescribed. If you become pregnant during treatment, consult your doctor without delay.



Breast-feeding

Safety not established. Discuss with your doctor.



Infants and children

Not prescribed.



Over 60

Increased risk of adverse effects. Reduced dose may therefore be necessary.



Driving and hazardous work

Avoid such activities until you have learned how irbesartan affects you because the drug can cause dizziness and fatigue.



Alcohol

Regular intake of excessive alcohol may raise the blood pressure and reduce the effectiveness of irbesartan.

POSSIBLE ADVERSE EFFECTS

Adverse effects are usually mild and transient. An exaggerated drop in blood

pressure may occur if you take the drug when dehydrated.

Symptom/effect	Frequency		Discuss with doctor		Stop taking drug now	Call doctor now
	Common	Rare	Only if severe	In all cases		
Dizziness/fatigue	●		●			
Flushing	●		●			
Nausea	●		●			
Headache		●	●			
Muscle or joint pains		●	●			
Rash		●		●		
Swollen face or lips		●		●	●	●

INTERACTIONS

Diuretics There is a risk of a sudden fall in blood pressure if these drugs are being taken when irbesartan treatment is started. They may also affect sodium and potassium levels in the blood.

Potassium supplements, potassium-sparing diuretics, and ciclosporin Used with irbesartan, these drugs may raise levels of potassium in the blood.

Antihypertensives increase the effects of irbesartan.

Lithium Irbesartan increases the blood levels and toxicity of lithium.

NSAIDs Some of these drugs may reduce the blood-pressure-lowering effects of irbesartan, and there is a risk that they may worsen kidney function.

ACE inhibitors (e.g. enalapril, captopril, lisinopril, or ramipril) and potassium salts may increase potassium levels when taken with irbesartan.

PROLONGED USE

No special problems.

Monitoring Periodic checks on blood potassium levels and kidney function may be performed.