

Haloperidol (Haldol, Halkid)

Haloperidol is used to treat a number of different problems.

It may slow your reactions and make you feel drowsy. If this happens, do not drive and do not use tools or machines.

Keep your regular appointments with your doctor. This is so your progress can be checked.

About haloperidol

Type of medicine	An antipsychotic medicine
Used mainly for	Easing the symptoms of schizophrenia and other mental, emotional or behavioural problems
Also called	Haldol®, Halkid®
Available as	Tablets and oral liquid medicine

Haloperidol is used to relieve the symptoms of [schizophrenia](#) and other problems which affect the way you think, feel or behave. These problems may make you hear, see or sense things that are not there, or believe things that are not true, or feel unusually suspicious. If you are taking haloperidol for these reasons, you may be prescribed tablets or capsules to take for a short while to get your symptoms under control, and then a long-acting, or 'depot', injection may be recommended for you. There is a separate medicine leaflet called [Haloperidol long-acting injection](#) which gives more information about this.

Haloperidol is also used for [tics \(movements which can't be controlled\)](#), sickness associated with advanced or terminal illnesses, and to treat persistent [hiccups](#).

Before taking haloperidol

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 haloperidol it is important that your doctor or pharmacist knows:

- If you are pregnant, trying for a baby or breastfeeding.
- If you have a heart condition or blood vessel problems.
- If you have liver, kidney, or prostate problems.
- If you have breathing problems.
- If you have any of the following: epilepsy, Parkinson's disease, depression, increased pressure in your eyes (glaucoma), or a condition causing muscle weakness, called myasthenia gravis.
- If you have ever had yellowing of your skin or the whites of the eyes (jaundice), or a blood disorder.
- If you have a tumour on your adrenal gland (phaeochromocytoma).
- If you have been told you have low levels of salts (electrolytes) in your blood.
- If you have ever had an allergic reaction to any medicine.
- If you are taking or using 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 haloperidol

- Before you start this treatment, read the manufacturer's printed information leaflet from inside your pack. The leaflet will give you more information about haloperidol and a full list of possible side-effects from taking it.

- Take haloperidol exactly as your doctor has told you to. You will be told what dose to take and when to take it, as this will depend upon the reason why you are taking haloperidol.
- When you first start taking haloperidol your doctor may give you a small dose and then gradually increase it. This will make sure that you have the dose that helps your condition and avoids any unwanted symptoms.
- You can take haloperidol before or after your meals. Swallow the dose with a drink of water.
- Try to take your doses at the same time of day each day, as this will help you to remember to take them.
- If you forget to take a dose, take it as soon as you remember. However, if when you remember, it is nearly time for your next dose then leave out the forgotten dose. Do not take two doses together to make up for a missed dose.

Getting the most from your treatment

- Your treatment will require careful monitoring to make sure that you get the best possible benefit from haloperidol. Keep your regular doctor's appointments so your progress can be checked. You will need to have some tests from time to time.
- Treatment with haloperidol for schizophrenia is usually long-term unless you experience an adverse effect. Keep taking it until your doctor tells you otherwise. Stopping suddenly can cause problems and your doctor may want you to reduce your dose gradually if this is necessary. If you have been given haloperidol to relieve severe agitation or anxiety, it will be given to you for a short time only until your symptoms have eased.
- Haloperidol may cause your skin to become more sensitive to sunlight than normal. Use a sunscreen that protects against UVA light and has a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 15, especially in strong sunlight or until you know how your skin reacts. Do not use sunbeds.

- If you are having an operation or any dental treatment, tell the person carrying out the treatment which medicines you are taking. This is important because haloperidol may interfere with any anaesthetic you receive.
- If you buy or take any 'over-the-counter' medicines, check with a pharmacist that they are suitable to take with haloperidol.
- If you drink alcohol, ask your doctor for advice about drinking while you are on haloperidol. Alcohol may increase the chance that you experience side-effects and may not be recommended for you.
- Smoking may affect the amount of haloperidol in your body. Let your doctor know if you start or stop smoking while you are taking haloperidol.
- If you have diabetes check your blood glucose levels regularly, as haloperidol may affect the levels of sugar in your blood.

Can haloperidol cause problems?

Along with their useful effects, most medicines can cause unwanted side-effects although not everyone experiences them. These usually improve as your body adjusts to the new medicine, but speak with your doctor or pharmacist if any of the following side-effects continue or become troublesome.

Common haloperidol side-effects	What can I do if I experience this?
Headache	Drink plenty of water and ask a pharmacist to recommend a suitable painkiller. If the headaches continue, let your doctor know
Feeling dizzy or sleepy, blurred vision	If this happens, do not drive and do not use tools or machines
Feeling light-headed when you stand up	This can happen particularly when you first start taking this medicine. Getting up more slowly until you are aware how you react should help
Stomach upset	Stick to simple meals, avoid rich or spicy foods
Dry mouth	Try chewing sugar-free gum or sucking sugar-free sweets
Feeling shaky or restless, unusual or uncontrollable muscle movements	Speak with your doctor as soon as possible about any of these. Your treatment may need adjusting
Changes in weight, difficulty sleeping, mood changes, stuffy nose, changes in sexual ability, breast enlargement, production of breast milk, menstrual problems, fast heartbeat, constipation, difficulty passing urine, skin rash	Discuss these with your doctor if any become troublesome

Important: if you experience any 'flu-like' symptoms including muscle stiffness, a very high temperature, confusion, a fast heartbeat, and sweating, you must contact your doctor immediately. These may be signs of a rare but serious condition known as neuroleptic malignant syndrome.

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

How to store haloperidol

- Keep all medicines out of the sight and reach 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.

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

Further reading

- [Manufacturer's PIL, Haldol® 2 mg/ml oral solution](#); Janssen-Cilag Ltd, The electronic Medicines Compendium. Dated December 2018.
- [Medicines Complete BNF 88th Edition](#); British Medical Association and Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain, London.

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