

Aminoglycoside antibiotic therapy

A patient's guide

Please read this leaflet carefully before this medicine is given to you. In some cases, this leaflet may be given to you after the medicine has been used. If you have any concerns about taking this medicine, ask your doctor or pharmacist. Keep this leaflet. You may want to read it again. This leaflet does not take the place of talking to your doctor or pharmacist.

'Aminoglycoside' is the family name of a group of antibiotics that includes gentamicin, tobramycin, streptomycin and amikacin.

All medicines have benefits and risks. Your doctor has weighed the risks of you having an aminoglycoside injection against the benefits this medicine is expected to have for you.

What are the benefits of aminoglycoside injections and what are they used for?

Aminoglycoside antibiotics work by killing bacteria, or preventing them from growing. They are used for serious bacterial infections in many parts of the body such as chest infections, urinary tract infections, infected wounds.

They may also be given to treat a rare infection called infective endocarditis. Infective endocarditis is an infection that can affect the tissue that lines the inside of the heart chambers. The infection usually involves one or more heart valves which are lined with endocardium. It is a serious infection that may be life-threatening.

Patients sometimes have to have aminoglycoside injections for a prolonged period; by this we mean more than 10 days.

What are the risks of aminoglycoside injections?

All medicines can have side effects. Aminoglycoside injections may cause permanent damage to your kidneys and/or your hearing. To minimise these

risks, aminoglycoside doses need to be monitored closely. This involves taking regular blood tests to ensure that your dose of aminoglycoside is enough to kill the bacteria but not high enough to cause side effects. It is important for you to report any dizziness, hearing loss or balance problems to your doctor, nurse or pharmacist.

When must aminoglycosides not be given?

- If you have an allergy to aminoglycoside antibiotics or to any other ingredients contained in the injection e.g. preservatives.
- If you have a muscle weakness disease called Myasthenia Gravis

Before you are given aminoglycosides tell your doctor if:

- You have any allergies to any other medicines
- You have any allergies to any other substances e.g. foods, preservatives or dyes
- You have been prescribed aminoglycoside injections in the past
- You are pregnant or intending to become pregnant
- You are breast feeding or are intending to breast feed
- You have or have had any medical conditions, especially the following:
 - » Kidney disease or any kidney problems
 - » Hearing problems or balance problems
 - » Myasthenia Gravis (a muscle disease)
 - » Parkinsons Disease (a disease affecting movement)
 - » Blindness
 - » Diabetes

Taking any other medicines

Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you are taking any other medicines, including any you buy without a prescription from your pharmacy, supermarket or health food shop.

Author ID: Pharmacy PA
 Department: Pharmacy
 Re-printed: June 2022
 Review date: June 2024
 Version: 4.1
 Leaflet number: PI 7

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