

Aminoglycoside antibiotic therapy

Patient information sheet

Before this medicine is given to you please read this leaflet carefully.

In some cases you may receive this leaflet after the medicine is given to you.

Do keep hold of this leaflet for future reference and please ask your doctor or pharmacist if you have any questions or concerns.

'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, and 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 aminoglycosides 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 eg preservatives.
- If you have a muscle weakness disease called myasthenia gravis.

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Large print copies and alternative language versions of this leaflet can be made available on request.

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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 eg 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.

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