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Catapres

Generic Name: clonidine (oral) (KLOE ni deen)
Brand Names: *Catapres*

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What is Catapres?

Catapres lowers blood pressure by decreasing the levels of certain chemicals in your blood. This allows your blood vessels to relax and your heart to beat more slowly and easily.

Catapres is used to treat hypertension (high blood pressure). It is sometimes used together with other blood pressure medications.

Although not approved by the FDA for these purposes, Catapres has also been used to relieve alcohol withdrawal, as an aid in methadone and opiate detoxification, as an aid in [quitting smoking](#), to treat diabetic diarrhea, to treat Tourette's Syndrome. Catapres has also been used to reduce menopausal flushing, to treat postherpetic neuralgia, to treat ulcerative colitis, and to diagnose pheochromocytoma.

Catapres may also be used for other purposes not listed in this medication guide.

Important information about Catapres

Before you take Catapres, tell your doctor if you have heart disease or severe coronary artery

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disease, a heart rhythm disorder, a history of heart attack or stroke, kidney disease, or if you have ever had an allergic reaction to a clonidine transdermal skin patch (Catapres TTS).

Do not stop taking Catapres suddenly without first talking to your doctor. Stopping this medication suddenly can cause nervousness, agitation, headache, tremors, severe high blood pressure, or life-threatening symptoms. Talk with your doctor about how to avoid withdrawal symptoms when you stop taking Catapres. Avoid drinking alcohol. It can increase some of the side effects of Catapres.

Tell your doctor about all the prescription and over-the-counter medications you use. This includes vitamins, minerals, herbal products, and drugs prescribed by other doctors. Do not start using a new medication without telling your doctor.

Catapres can cause side effects that may impair your thinking or reactions. Be careful if you drive or do anything that requires you to be awake and alert. Keep using this medicine as directed, even if you feel well. High blood pressure often has no symptoms. You may need to use blood pressure medication for the rest of your life.

Before taking Catapres

You should not take Catapres if you are allergic to clonidine.

If you have certain conditions, you may need a dose adjustment or special tests to safely use Catapres. Before you take Catapres, tell your doctor if you have:

- heart disease or severe coronary artery disease;
- a heart rhythm disorder;
- a history of heart attack or stroke;
- kidney disease; or
- if you have ever had an allergic reaction to a clonidine transdermal skin patch (Catapres TTS).

FDA pregnancy category C. It is not known if Catapres is harmful to an unborn baby. Tell your doctor if you are pregnant or plan to [become pregnant](#) during treatment. Clonidine can pass into breast milk and may harm a nursing baby. Do not take this medication without telling your doctor if you are breast-feeding a baby. Do not give this medication to a child younger than 12 years old.

See also: [Catapres pregnancy and breastfeeding warnings](#) (in more detail)

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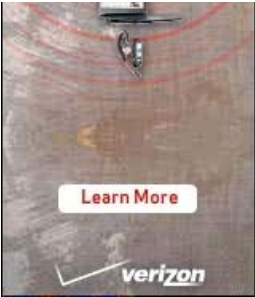
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How should I take Catapres?

Take Catapres exactly as it was prescribed for you. Do not take the medication in larger amounts, or take it for longer than recommended by your doctor. Follow the instructions on your prescription label.

Your doctor may occasionally change your dose to make sure you get the best results from Catapres.



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Catapres is usually taken in the morning and at bedtime. Follow your doctor's instructions.

If you need to have any type of surgery, tell the surgeon ahead of time that you are taking Catapres. You may need to stop using the medicine for a short time. Do not stop taking this medication suddenly without first talking to your doctor. Stopping Catapres suddenly can cause nervousness, agitation, headache, tremors, severe high blood pressure, or life-threatening symptoms. Talk with your doctor about how to avoid withdrawal symptoms when you stop taking Catapres.

Keep using this medicine as directed, even if you feel well. High blood pressure often has no symptoms. You may need to use blood pressure medication for the rest of your life.

Store Catapres at room temperature away from moisture, heat, and light.

See also: [Catapres dosage](#) (in more detail)

What happens if I miss a dose?

Take the missed dose as soon as you remember. If it is almost time for your next dose, wait until then to take the medicine and skip the missed dose. Do not take Catapres to make up the missed dose.

What happens if I overdose?

Seek emergency medical attention if you think you have used too much of this medicine. Overdose symptoms may include high blood pressure (severe headache, blurred vision, buzzing in your ears, anxiety, confusion, chest pain, shortness of breath) followed by low blood pressure (feeling light-headed, fainting), drowsiness, cold feeling, slow heart rate, shallow breathing, weakness, fainting, or pinpoint pupils.

What should I avoid while taking Catapres?

Avoid drinking alcohol. It can increase some of the side effects of Catapres. Clonidine can cause side effects that may impair your thinking or reactions. Be careful if you drive or do anything that requires you to be awake and alert.

[Catapres support group](#) to connect with others who have similar interests.



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Catapres side effects

Get emergency medical help if you have any of these signs of an allergic reaction: hives; difficulty breathing; swelling of your face, lips, tongue, or throat. Call your doctor at once if you have any of these serious side effects:

- fast or pounding heartbeats;
- a very slow heart rate (fewer than 60 beats per minute);
- feeling short of breath, even with mild exertion;
- swelling, rapid weight gain;

- confusion, hallucinations;
- fever, pale skin;
- urinating less than usual or not at all; or
- feeling like you might pass out.

Less serious Catapres side effects may include:

- feeling dizzy, drowsy, tired, or nervous;
- dry [mouth](#);
- dry or burning eyes, blurred vision;
- headache, muscle or joint pain;
- nausea, vomiting, constipation, loss of appetite;
- sleep problems (insomnia);
- urinating more at night;
- mild skin rash or itching; or
- decreased sex drive, impotence.

This is not a complete list of side effects and others may occur. Tell your doctor about any unusual or bothersome side effect. You may report side effects to FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.

See also: [Catapres side effects](#) (in more detail)

What other drugs will affect Catapres?

Before taking Catapres, tell your doctor if you regularly use other medicines that make you sleepy (such as cold or allergy medicine, narcotic pain medicine, sleeping pills, muscle relaxers, and medicine for seizures, depression, or anxiety). They can add to sleepiness caused by Catapres.

Tell your doctor about all other medications you use, especially:

- clonidine transdermal skin patches (Catapres TTS);
- digitalis (digoxin, Lanoxin, Lanoxicaps);
- an antidepressant such as amitriptyline (Elavil, Etrafon);
- a beta-blocker such as atenolol (Tenormin), carvedilol (Coreg), labetalol (Normodyne, Trandate), metoprolol (Lopressor, Toprol), nadolol (Corgard), propranolol (Inderal, InnoPran), sotalol (Betapace), and others;
- a calcium channel blocker such as amlodipine (Norvasc), diltiazem (Tiazac, Cartia, Cardizem), felodipine (Plendil), nifedipine (Procardia, Adalat), verapamil (Calan, Covera, Isoptin, Verelan), and others; or
- any other drugs to treat high blood pressure or heart problems.

This list is not complete and there may be other drugs that can interact with Catapres. Tell your doctor about all the prescription and over-the-counter medications you use. This includes vitamins, minerals, herbal products, and drugs prescribed by other doctors. Do not start using a new medication without telling your doctor.

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- Remember, keep this and all other medicines out of the reach of children, never share your medicines with others, and use Catapres only for the indication prescribed.
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