Prescribing Tips for Amlodipine in Hypertension and Stable Angina

A range of amlodipine preparations are available. Different salts are interchangeable (e.g. besilate, maleate). An up-to-date listing is available on the Health Products Regulatory Authority (HPRA) website at [www.hpra.ie](http://www.hpra.ie).

**Therapeutic Indications**
- Hypertension
- Chronic stable angina
- Vasospastic (Prinzmetal’s) angina

**Hypertension and Stable Angina: Dosing and Administration**

Full prescribing information is available in the Summary of Product Characteristics (SmPC) which may be accessed freely online at [www.hpra.ie](http://www.hpra.ie) or [www.medicines.ie](http://www.medicines.ie). Please consult the SmPC for guidance on prescribing in special patient populations e.g. renal or hepatic impairment.

**Table 1: Dosing and administration of amlodipine in hypertension and stable angina**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypertension and stable angina</th>
<th>Starting dose</th>
<th>Maximum daily dose</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adults</td>
<td>5mg once daily</td>
<td>Increase up to a maximum of 10mg daily</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elderly (&gt;65 years)</td>
<td>Dose as per adults, increase dose with care</td>
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**TARGET FOR BLOOD PRESSURE LOWERING**
- In most patients the target systolic blood pressure is <140mmHg. A diastolic blood pressure target of <90mmHg is generally recommended, except in patients with diabetes in whom values <85mmHg are recommended.
- In patients ≥80 years old the target is <150/90mmHg.

Further advice on blood pressure targets including specific populations is available from NICE at [www.NICE.org.uk](http://www.NICE.org.uk) and through the ESC website at [www.escardio.org](http://www.escardio.org).

**CONTRAINDICATIONS**
- Cardiogenic shock
- Significant aortic stenosis
- Unstable angina
- Severe hypotension
- Unstable heart failure
- Obstruction of outflow to the left ventricle

**INTERACTIONS**
- Strong/moderate inhibitors of CYP3A4: concomitant use may ↑ levels of amlodipine causing ↑ side effects e.g. azole antifungals (itraconazole), macrolide antibiotics (erythromycin, clarithromycin) and protease inhibitors (ritonavir). Monitor and ↓ dose of amlodipine if required.
- Inducers of CYP3A4: concomitant use may ↓ effects of amlodipine e.g. phenytoin, carbamazepine and rifampicin. Monitor and ↑ dose of amlodipine if required.
- Antihypertensives: enhanced hypotensive effect, ↑ risk of first dose hypotension with alpha-blockers.
- Simvastatin: concomitant use may ↑ levels of simvastatin, ↑ risk of myopathy. Maximum of 20mg simvastatin daily should be administered with amlodipine.
- Grapefruit juice: not recommended, may ↑ effect of amlodipine.

**CAUTIONS**
- Heart failure: ↑ risk of pulmonary oedema
- Hepatic impairment: initiate at low dose
- Renal impairment: normal dose recommended
- Elderly patients: ↑ dose with caution

**MONITOR**
- Blood pressure
- Adverse Drug Reactions (ADRs): Peripheral oedema, headache, dizziness, fatigue, flushing, nausea, abdominal pain and sleep disturbance.*

- Peripheral oedema caused by calcium channel blockers does not respond to diuretics. Patients who experience peripheral oedema while taking amlodipine may benefit from switching to lercanidipine.

* A full list of adverse-effects is available in the SmPC.

**REFERENCES:** SmPC Istin® 5mg tablets, BNF 71 March-September 2016, Stockley’s drug interactions 11th edition March 2016.

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