There are many reasons why your doctor may have you take amiodarone. One reason is to treat atrial fibrillation. This is a type of abnormal heart rhythm – often called an irregular heartbeat.

**When Taking Amiodarone**
The usual maintenance dose of amiodarone is 200-400mg per day for ____ weeks. Sometimes the starting dose may be much higher than this. Your doctor will set the dose and length of time you take it.

- Take each dose at the same time every day.
- While this medication may be taken with or without food, taking it with food may help prevent an upset stomach.
- Store your medication at room temperature away from moisture and sunlight. Do not store it in the bathroom.

You will need to be checked while you are taking amiodarone to make certain that the medication is working well and is safe for you. You may need:

- Lab work to test thyroid and liver function
- EKGs (electrocardiograms)
- Blood pressure checks
- Daily pulse rate checks – We will teach you how to do these if your doctor orders them.

**Common Side Effects**

- Dizziness or weakness – Use caution when you are driving, climbing stairs, or doing tasks that require you to be alert.
- Insomnia (problems sleeping) – Talk with your doctor if this is a problem.
- Nausea, vomiting, loss of appetite or constipation – Talk with your doctor if any of these are a problem.
- Abnormal bitter taste – Try:
  - eating small frequent meals
  - brushing your teeth often
  - chewing gum
  - using lozenges or mouth wash
- Sunburn – Avoid direct sunlight. Use sunscreen and wear protective clothing and eyewear when you are outside.

**Key Points**

- If you miss a dose, skip the missed dose, and continue your regular schedule.
- If you forget to take amiodarone for 2 to 3 days in a row, call your heart doctor (cardiologist).
- Do not change your dose or stop taking amiodarone without checking with your heart doctor.
Key Points (continued)

- Tell your doctor or dentist that you are taking amiodarone before you have any kind of surgery.
- Talk to your doctor or pharmacist before taking any new medication including over-the-counter or herbal products. Be sure to tell your doctor and pharmacist about **ALL** of the medications that you are currently taking including over-the-counter and herbal products.

Call your doctor if you are having:

- Shortness of breath
- Chest pain
- Irregular or slow heartbeats
- Problems with your vision
- Abnormal bruising or bleeding

Follow Up

Follow up with your heart doctor after your discharge from the hospital. This is very important. The heart doctor will want to follow you closely while you are taking amiodarone and will tell you how long you will be taking it.

Talk with you doctor or pharmacist about any questions or concerns.