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DAMIAN RASCH, D.O.

ENCINITAS · LA JOLLA, CALIFORNIA



Living Well on Multaq

Multaq (dronedarone) helps keep your heart in a steady, normal rhythm after atrial fibrillation.

400 mg
in each tablet, one with breakfast and one with dinner

2 a day
always with a meal, because food helps your body absorb it

3 months
or about that, between follow-up visits, with an EKG and blood tests

WHAT IT DOES

Holding on to a normal rhythm



In atrial fibrillation, the electrical signals in your heart become irregular. Multaq helps control them. It's typically prescribed for people who have had episodes in the past but are in normal rhythm now, and it significantly reduces the chance of a hospital stay for rhythm problems. Unlike many other rhythm medicines, it can be safely started in the office.

EVERY DAY

How to take it

1. **With breakfast**
   Take one 400 mg tablet with breakfast. Food helps your body absorb it properly, so don't skip meals.

2. **With dinner**
   Take the second 400 mg tablet with dinner. Most people find it helps to link their pills to their regular meals.

3. **Even when you feel well**
   Rhythm medicines work best at steady levels. Stopping can let the irregular rhythm come back, so never stop without talking to your doctor.

Before you start, your heart needs to be in normal rhythm, and you need a blood thinner if one is right for you. Your history is reviewed first. Permanent atrial fibrillation, severe or recently worsened heart failure, or a resting pulse under 50 make Multaq inappropriate.

Steady habits

Multaq works quietly in the background while you keep up your normal activities. Taking it consistently with food and staying in regular contact with your healthcare team are what make treatment succeed.

CHECKUPS, SIDE EFFECTS AND WHEN TO CALL ARE ON THE BACK

STAYING ON TRACK

Checkups, side effects and when to call

1. **An EKG**
   Checks your heart rhythm at each follow-up visit, about every three months.
2. **Blood tests**
   Make sure your liver and kidney function remain normal.
3. **A symptom review**
   A chance to go over any symptoms or concerns you've had since your last visit.

The schedule may be adjusted to your own needs, or if anything irregular turns up.

WHAT TO EXPECT

most people tolerate it well

Mild stomach upset	Some people get it, especially when starting. It often improves within a few days, and taking the pills with food usually helps.
A slightly slower pulse	This is normal and expected. Multaq has a gentle effect on heart rate as part of how it protects against irregular rhythms.
Blood pressure	Multaq does not lower blood pressure in any meaningful way. Keep taking your blood pressure medicines as prescribed.
Thyroid	Multaq doesn't affect the thyroid gland the way some similar medicines can.

CALL 911

Fainting or a slow pulse	Call 911 if you faint, or if a very slow pulse comes with lightheadedness.

CALL YOUR DOCTOR'S OFFICE

the same day for liver signs

Liver warning signs	Loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting, fever, unusual tiredness, or pain in the right upper belly.
Skin, eyes or urine	Yellowing of your skin or eyes, dark urine, or itching.
Heart failure signs	Tell your doctor promptly about weight gain, ankle swelling or more shortness of breath.

FIVE GROUND RULES

With food	Always take Multaq with food, for proper absorption.
Never stop alone	Never stop it without discussing it with your doctor first.
Tell every provider	Let all your healthcare providers know you take Multaq. It mixes badly with some drugs and with grapefruit juice.
Keep your visits	Keep your scheduled follow-up appointments for monitoring.
Other heart medicines	Continue any other heart medicines as prescribed.

KEEP YOUR BLOOD THINNER

If you've been prescribed a blood thinner, keep taking it alongside Multaq. The two work together. Multaq helps prevent irregular rhythms, and the blood thinner adds stroke protection.

READ THE FULL ARTICLE

damianrasch.com/multaq

For education only, and not a substitute for advice from your own physician. Condensed from Dr. Rasch's article on Multaq (dronedarone) at damianrasch.com, which draws on the Multaq prescribing information.

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