

Atrovent Inhaler : prescribing information.

Contributors

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How?

How effective is Atrovent?

In patients with chronic reversible airways obstruction, Atrovent has a therapeutic effectiveness of the same order as salbutamol, isoprenaline, orciprenaline and other sympathomimetics - with an action lasting from 4 to 6 hours.

Why?

Why are cardiovascular or other anticholinergic problems unlikely?

So small is the normal therapeutic dose that to all intents and purposes Atrovent acts on the airways alone. Unlike sympathomimetic bronchodilators it does not increase heart rate - even at dosages dozens of times that necessary for therapeutic effect. Unlike earlier anticholinergics it has no adverse effects on sputum flow or volume, salivary secretion, ocular function, the urinary tract or gut motility. Long-term problems have not been observed.

Why?

Why is Atrovent presented as an inhaler?

Atrovent takes full advantage of the therapeutic opportunities of inhalation. Minute but measured doses of the new anticholinergic agent ipratropium bromide are delivered - logically - right to the site of localised action deep in the bronchial tree. Furthermore dosage is kept quick, simple and convenient.

When?

When can it be given with other agents?

Atrovent has been shown to be compatible with other bronchodilators in common use. Its distinctive mode of action also provides a radically different approach when an alternative is needed. Atrovent may also be used in patients receiving β -blocking drugs for other indications.

Where?

Where is there evidence for Atrovent?

An exceptionally thorough range of clinical investigations, including long periods of routine use under close scrutiny, attests to the problem-free nature of Atrovent treatment. Well over 100 have been published, many of them in the Proceedings of an international symposium on Atrovent.*

Atrovent[®] Inhaler

Prescribing Information

Presentation

Metered dose inhaler 10ml (200 metered doses) available as complete unit with mouthpiece. Each metered dose contains ipratropium bromide 0.02mg of which 0.018mg is available to the patient.

Uses

Action

Atrovent is an anticholinergic drug having bronchodilator properties.

Indications

Atrovent is indicated in the treatment of chronic reversible airways obstruction, particularly in chronic bronchitis.

Dosage and Administration

Adults

Usually 1 or 2 puffs 3 or 4 times daily, although some patients may need up to 4 puffs at a time to obtain maximum benefit during early treatment.

Children

6-12 years: Usually 1 or 2 puffs 3 times daily.

Under 6 years: Usually 1 puff 3 times daily.

In order to ensure that the inhaler is used correctly, administration should be supervised by an adult.

Contra-indications, Precautions and Side-effects

Contra-indications

Known sensitivity to atropine.

Precautions

Patients must be instructed in the correct use of a metered dose inhaler and warned against the accidental release of the contents into the eye.

Generally, caution is advocated in the use of anticholinergic agents in patients with glaucoma and prostatic hypertrophy. However, specific studies with Atrovent in patients with glaucoma showed that inhaling cumulative doses of 0.16mg (8 puffs) had no effect on the eye. There have been no reports of urinary retention or constipation.

As with any drug, caution should be observed during the first trimester of pregnancy.

If a reduced response to Atrovent becomes apparent, the patient should seek medical advice.

Side-effects

Anticholinergic side-effects are unlikely to occur at therapeutic doses.

At doses considerably higher than the therapeutic range some patients may complain of a dry mouth. There is no evidence that in the therapeutic dose range Atrovent has any adverse effect on bronchial secretion.

Overdosage

Accidental overdose by inhalation is unlikely. Cumulative inhaled doses of up to 1.2mg (equivalent to 60 puffs) produced no increase in heart rate. Single doses of ipratropium bromide 30mg by mouth cause anticholinergic side-effects but these are not severe and do not require specific reversal.

Pharmaceutical Precautions

Atrovent should not be stored above 25°C. The vials should not be punctured or incinerated even when empty.

Legal Category

Prescription only medicine (POM).

Pack Size & Basic NHS Price (UK only)

10ml vial (200 metered doses) complete with mouthpiece - £2.55

Further Information

There is evidence that the concurrent administration of Atrovent and sympathomimetic drugs produces a greater relief of bronchospasm than either drug given alone.

Atrovent has been shown to produce effective bronchodilation in patients receiving β -blocking agents.

Product Licence Data

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