Hydroxyzine Dihydrochloride

Sodium Hydroxyzine Dihydrochloride

**PRODUCT DESCRIPTION**

Hydroxyzine dihydrochloride (Iterax®) 10 mg tablet: Each white, round, film-coated tablet contains hydroxyzine dihydrochloride 10mg.

Hydroxyzine dihydrochloride (Iterax®) 25 mg tablet: Each white, oblong, film-coated tablet, with a bisect line contains hydroxyzine dihydrochloride 25 mg.

Hydroxyzine dihydrochloride (Iterax®) 2 mg/mL syrup: Each mL of clear colourless solution contains hydroxyzine dihydrochloride 2mg.

**PHARMACOLOGIC PROPERTIES**

**Pharmacodynamics**

**Pharmacotherapeutic group**

Anxiolytics; Diphenylmethane derivatives

**Mechanism of Action**

Hydroxyzine is a first generation antihistamine that crosses the blood/brain barrier extensively and has a high affinity for histaminic receptors into the brain, thereby producing sedative-anxiolytic effects.

**Pharmacodynamic effects**

Antihistaminic and bronchodilator activities have been demonstrated experimentally and confirmed clinically. An antiemetic effect, both by the apomorphine test and the veriloid test, has been demonstrated. Pharmacological and clinical studies indicate that hydroxyzine at therapeutic dosage does not increase gastric secretion or acidity and in most cases has mild antisecretory activity. Wheal and flare reduction have been demonstrated in adult healthy volunteers and in children after intradermal injections of histamine or antigens. Hydroxyzine has also revealed its efficacy in relieving pruritus in various forms of urticaria, eczema and dermatitis.

**Onset of action**

The antihistaminic effect begins approximately after 1 hour with oral pharmaceutical forms. The sedative effect starts after 5-10 minutes with oral liquid and after 30-45 minutes with tablets.

Hydroxyzine has a weak affinity for muscarinic receptors.

**Pharmacokinetics**

**Absorption**

Hydroxyzine is rapidly absorbed from the gastro-intestinal tract. The peak plasma level (Cmax) is reached approximately two hours after oral intake. After single oral doses of 25 mg and 50 mg in adults, Cmax concentrations are typically 30 and 70 ng/mL, respectively.

The rate and extent of exposure to hydroxyzine is very similar when given as tablet or as a syrup. Following repeat administration once a day, concentrations are increased by 30%.

The oral bioavailability of hydroxyzine with respect to intramuscular (IM) administration is about 80%. After a single 50 mg IM dose, Cmax concentrations are typically 65 ng/mL.

**Distribution**

Hydroxyzine is widely distributed in the body and generally more concentrated in the tissues than in plasma. The apparent volume of distribution is 7 to 16 l/kg in adults.

Hydroxyzine enters the skin following oral administration. Skin concentrations of hydroxyzine are higher than serum concentrations, following both single and multiple administration. Hydroxyzine crosses the blood-brain and placental barriers leading to higher foetal than maternal concentrations.

**Metabolism**

Hydroxyzine is extensively metabolised. The formation of the major metabolite cetirizine, a carboxylic acid metabolite (approximately 45% of the oral dose), is mediated by alcohol dehydrogenase. This metabolite has significant peripheral H1-antagonist properties. The other metabolites identified include a N-dealkylated metabolite, and an O-dealkylated metabolite with a plasma half-life of 59 hours. These pathways are mediated principally by CYP3A4/5.

**Elimination**

Hydroxyzine half-life in adults is approximately 14 hours (range: 7 - 20 hrs). The apparent total body clearance calculated across studies is 13 ml/min/kg. Only 0.8% of the dose is excreted unchanged in urine. The major metabolite cetirizine is excreted mainly unchanged in urine (25% and 16 % of the hydroxyzine oral and IM dose, respectively).

**Special patient populations**

**Children**

The pharmacokinetics of hydroxyzine was evaluated in 12 paediatric patients (mean 6.1 ± 4.6 yrs; 22.0 ± 12.0 kg) following a single oral dose of 0.7 mg/kg. The apparent plasma clearance was approximately 2.5 times that in adults. The half-life was shorter than in adults. It was approximately 4 hours in the 1 year-old patients and 11 hours in the 14 year-old-patients.

Dosage should be adjusted in paediatric population (see Section Dosage and Administration).

**Elderly**

The pharmacokinetics of hydroxyzine was investigated in 9 healthy elderly subjects (69.5 ± 3.7 years) following a single 0.7 mg/kg oral dose. The elimination half-life of hydroxyzine was prolonged to 29 hours and the apparent volume of distribution was increased to 22.5 l/kg. It is recommended to reduce by half the daily dose of hydroxyzine in elderly patients (see Section Dosage and Administration).

**Renal impairment**

The pharmacokinetics of hydroxyzine was studied in 8 severe renally impaired subjects (Creatinine clearance: 24 ± 7 ml/min).

The extent of exposure (AUC) to hydroxyzine was not altered in a relevant manner while that to the carboxylic metabolite, cetirizine, was increased. This metabolite is not removed efficiently by haemodialysis. In order to avoid any important accumulation of the cetirizine metabolite following multiple doses of hydroxyzine, the daily dose of hydroxyzine should be reduced in subjects with impaired renal function (see Section Dosage and Administration).

**Dosage and Administration**

**Dosage should be adjusted in paediatric population**

**Renal impairment**

**Special patient populations**

**Elderly**

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**Hepatic impairment**

In subjects with hepatic dysfunction secondary to primary biliary cirrhosis, total body clearance was approximately 66% that of normal subjects. The half-life was increased to 37 hours and the serum concentrations of the carboxylic metabolite, cetirizine, were higher than in young patients with a normal liver function. Daily dose or dose frequency should be reduced in patients with impaired liver function (see Section Dosage and Administration).

**Clinical Studies**

Not relevant for this product.

**NON-CLINICAL INFORMATION**

The safety pharmacology, acute, sub-acute and chronic toxicity studies did not raise significant safety concerns from data in rodents, dogs and monkeys. Lethal doses 50 (LD50) in rats and mice are respectively 690 and 550 mg/kg per os whereas these are 81 and 56 mg/kg intra venous (i.v.)

Single oral doses of 80 mg/kg and above induced signs of depression, ataxia, convulsions and tremors in dogs. In monkeys, at oral doses exceeding 50 mg/kg, some vomiting occurred without any other signs up to 400 mg/kg, whereas i.v. doses of 15 mg/kg caused transient ataxia and convulsions, with complete recovery within 5 minutes after dosing. Intra-arterial injections lead to important local tissue lesions in rabbits.

In isolated canine Purkinje fibres, hydroxyzine at 3µM increased action potential duration suggesting that there was an interaction with potassium channels involved with the repolarisation phase. At a higher concentration, 30µM, there was a marked decrease in the action potential duration suggesting a possible interaction with calcium and/or sodium currents. Hydroxyzine produced inhibition of the potassium (I\textsubscript{K}) current in human ether –a-go-go-related gene (hERG) channels expressed in mammalian cells, with an IC50 of 0.62µM, a concentration that is between 10 and 60-fold higher than therapeutic concentrations. Moreover, the hydroxyzine concentrations required to produce effects on cardiac electrophysiology are 10 to 100-fold higher than those required to block H1 and 5-HT2 receptors. In unrestrained conscious dogs monitored by telemetry, hydroxyzine and its enantiomers produced similar cardiovascular profiles though there were some minor differences. In a first dog telemetry study, hydroxyzine (21 mg/kg po) slightly increased heart rate and shortened PR and QT intervals. There was no effect on QRS and QTc intervals, and thus at normal therapeutic doses, these slight changes are unlikely to be of clinical concern. Similar effects on heart rate and PR interval were observed in a second dog telemetry study, where the absence of effects of hydroxyzine on QTc interval was confirmed up to a single oral dose of 36 mg/kg.

In rats, hydroxyzine administered for 30 days was well tolerated at 20 mg/kg/day s.c., but some mortalities occurred at 200 mg/kg/day per os. Chronic toxicity was tested in rats at oral doses up to 50 mg/day in 100 g food for 24 weeks without clinical signs or histopathological abnormalities. Doses of 10 mg/kg/day for 70 days reduced the concentration and the viability of spermatocytes in male rats.

In dogs, oral doses up to 20 mg/kg/day during 6 months were not associated with any histopathological changes. Teratogenicity was assessed in pregnant rodents: foetal malformations and foetal abortions were associated with doses over 50 mg/kg of hydroxyzine, this being due to the accumulation of norchlorcyclizine metabolite. Teratogenic doses are much higher than those used in man for therapeutic purpose. No mutagenic activity was shown in the Ames test. A mouse lymphoma study showed marginal increases in mutations of low magnitude in the presence of S9 at ≥ 15 µg/ml. This was close to the maximum level of toxicity for this study. A study for micronuclei induction in rats was negative. As only very marginal effects were noted in the in vitro study and the in vivo study was negative, it is considered that hydroxyzine is not a mutagen.

Animal carcinogenicity studies have not been undertaken with hydroxyzine. However, the drug is not mutagenic and has not been associated with any overt increased tumorigenic risk during several decades of clinical use.

**INDICATIONS**

Hydroxyzine dihydrochloride (Iterax®) is indicated for:

- the symptomatic relief of anxiety in adults;
- the symptomatic relief of pruritus;
- premedication before surgery.

**DOSEAGE AND ADMINISTRATION**

For oral use.

**Adults**

The maximum single dose in adults should not exceed 200 mg whereas the maximum daily dose should not exceed 300 mg.

*For symptomatic treatment of anxiety*

50 mg/day in 3 separate administrations of 12.5-12.5-25 mg; in more severe cases doses of up to 300 mg/day can be used.

*For symptomatic treatment of pruritus*

Starting dose of 25 mg at night, increasing as necessary to 25 mg three or four times daily.

*For premedication before surgery*

50 to 200 mg/day in 1 or 2 administrations; single administration 1 hour before surgery, which may be preceded by 1 administration the night before anaesthesia.

**Children (from 12 months)** (see Sections: Warnings and Precautions; Pharmacokinetics)

*For symptomatic treatment of pruritus*

- from 12 months to 6 years old: 1 mg/kg/day up to 2.5 mg/kg/day in divided doses,
- over 6 years old: 1 mg/kg/day up to 2 mg/kg/day in divided doses.

*For premedication before surgery*

Single administration of 1 mg/kg 1 hour before surgery, which may be preceded by 1mg/kg the night before anaesthesia.

**Special Populations**

The dosage should be adapted within the recommended dose range accordingly to the patient’s response to therapy.
Elderly
In the elderly, it is advised to start with half the recommended dose due to a prolonged action (see Section Pharmacokinetics).

Renal impairment
Dosage should be reduced in patients with moderate or severe renal function impairment due to decreased excretion of its metabolite cetirizine (see Section Pharmacokinetics).

Hepatic impairment
In patients with hepatic dysfunction, it is recommended to reduce the daily dose by 33% (see Section Pharmacokinetics).

CONTRAINDICATIONS

Hydroxyzine is contraindicated in:
- patients with a history of hypersensitivity to hydroxyzine or any of the excipients, to cetirizine, to other piperazine derivatives, to aminophylline, or to ethylenediamine.
- pregnancy and lactation (see Section Pregnancy and Lactation).
- patients with porphyria.
- patients with pre-existing prolonged QT interval.

WARNINGS AND PRECAUTIONS

Convulsions
Hydroxyzine should be administered cautiously in patients with increased potential for convulsions.

Children
Young children are more susceptible to develop adverse events related to the central nervous system (see Section Adverse Reactions). In children, convulsions have been more frequently reported than in adults.

Hydroxyzine anticholinergic effects
Because of its potential anticholinergic effects, hydroxyzine should be used cautiously in patients suffering from glaucoma, bladder outflow obstruction, decreased gastro-intestinal motility, myasthenia gravis, or dementia.

Co - administration with CNS depressants
Dosage adjustments may be required if hydroxyzine is used simultaneously with other central nervous system depressant drugs or with drugs having anticholinergic properties (see Section Interactions).

Alcohol
The concomitant use of alcohol and hydroxyzine should be avoided (see Section Interactions).

Cardiac disorders
Caution is needed in patients who have a known predisposing factor to cardiac arrhythmia, including electrolytes imbalance (hypokalaemia, hypomagnesaemia), who have pre-existing heart disease, or who are concomitantly treated with a potentially arrhythmogenic drug. In these patients use of alternative treatments is to be considered.

Elderly
In the elderly, it is advised to start with half the recommended dose due to a prolonged action.

Hepatic and renal impairment
Hydroxyzine dosage should be reduced in patients with hepatic dysfunction and in patients with moderate or severe renal impairment.

Syrup Sucrose
This product contains sucrose. At a dose higher than 6.5 ml of the 2 mg/ml hydroxyzine syrup, the sucrose content should be taken into consideration in patients with diabetes mellitus. Sucrose may be harmful to the teeth.

Patients with rare hereditary problems of fructose intolerance, glucose-galactose malabsorption or sucrase-isomaltase insufficiency should not take this medicine.

Ethanol
Hydroxyzine 2 mg/ml syrup contains small amounts (0.1 vol %) of ethanol (alcohol).

The concentration of alcohol after the administration of 100 ml syrup (equivalent to 200 mg of hydroxyzine) will be up to 100 mg, equivalent to 2 ml beer or 1 ml wine. This has to be taken into account for patient suffering from alcoholism, children, and high-risk groups such as patients with liver disease, or epilepsy.

Tablets Lactose
Hydroxyzine film-coated tablets contain lactose. Patients with rare hereditary problems of galactose intolerance, the Lapp lactase deficiency or glucose-galactose malabsorption should not take this medicine.

Ability to perform tasks that require judgement, motor or cognitive skills
Hydroxyzine may impair the ability to react and to concentrate. Patients should be warned of this possibility and cautioned against driving a car or operating machinery. Concomitant use of hydroxyzine with alcohol or other sedative drugs should be avoided as it aggravates these effects.

DRUG INTERACTIONS

CNS depressants
Patients should be informed that hydroxyzine may potentiate the effects of barbiturates, other CNS depressants or drugs having anticholinergic properties.

Alcohol
Alcohol also potentiates the effects of hydroxyzine.

Betahistine and anticholinesterase drugs
Hydroxyzine antagonises the effects of betahistine and anticholinesterase drugs.

Tests results
The treatment should be stopped at least 5 days before allergy testing or methacholine bronchial challenge, to avoid effects on the test results.

Monoamine oxidase inhibitors
Simultaneous administration of hydroxyzine with monoamine oxidase inhibitors should be avoided.
Epinephrine
Hydroxyzine counteracts the pressor action of epinephrine.
Phenytoin
In rats, hydroxyzine antagonised the anticonvulsant action of phenytoin.
Cimetidine
Cimetidine 600 mg b.i.d. has been shown to increase the serum concentrations of hydroxyzine by 36% and to decrease peak concentrations of the metabolite cetirizine by 20%.
CYP2D6 substrates
Hydroxyzine is an inhibitor of cytochrome P450 2D6 (Ki: 3.9 µM ; 1.7 µg/ml) and may cause at high doses drug-drug interactions with CYP2D6 substrates.
Effect on other drug metabolism
Hydroxyzine has no inhibitory effect at 100 µM on UDP-glucuronyl transferase isoforms 1A1 and 1A6 in human liver microsomes. It inhibits cytochrome P450 2C9/10, 2C19 and 3A4 isoforms at concentrations (IC50 : 19 to 140 µM ; 7 to 52 µg/ml) well above peak plasma concentrations. The metabolite cetirizine at 100 µM has no inhibitory effect on human liver cytochrome P450 (1A2, 2A6, 2B/10, 2C19, 2D6, 2E1 and 3A4) and UDP-glucuronyl transferase isoforms. Therefore, hydroxyzine is unlikely to impair the metabolism of drugs which are substrates for these enzymes.
Potent inhibitors of liver enzymes
As hydroxyzine is metabolised in the liver, an increase in hydroxyzine blood concentrations may be expected when hydroxyzine is co-administered with other drugs known to be potent inhibitors of liver enzymes.
Potentially arrhythmogenic drugs
Co-administration of hydroxyzine with a potentially arrhythmogenic drug may increase the risk of QT prolongation and Torsade de Pointes.
PREGNANCY AND LACTATION
Fertility
There are no relevant data available.
Pregnancy
Hydroxyzine is contraindicated during pregnancy (see Section Contraindications).
Animal studies have shown reproductive toxicity.
Hydroxyzine crosses the placental barrier leading to higher foetal than maternal concentrations.
To date, no relevant epidemiological data are available relating to exposure to hydroxyzine during pregnancy.
In neonates whose mothers received hydroxyzine during late pregnancy and/or labour, the following events were observed immediately or only a few hours after birth : hypotonia, movement disorders including extrapyramidal disorders, clonic movements, CNS depression, neonatal hypoxic conditions, or urinary retention.
Lactation
Hydroxyzine is contraindicated during lactation (see Section Contraindications). Breast-feeding should be stopped if hydroxyzine therapy is needed.
Cetirizine, the principal metabolite of hydroxyzine, is excreted in human milk.
Although no formal studies have been performed on the excretion of hydroxyzine in human milk, severe adverse effects have been shown in breastfed newborns/infants of hydroxyzine treated mothers.
ADVERSE EFFECTS
Undesirable effects are mainly related to CNS depressant or paradoxical CNS stimulation effects, to anticholinergic activity, or to hypersensitivity reactions.
Adverse reactions are ranked under headings of frequency using the following convention:
Very common ≥1/10
Common ≥1/100 to <1/10
Uncommon ≥1/1000 to <1/100
Rare ≥1/10000 to <1/1000
Very rare <1/10000
Net known (cannot be estimated from the available data).
Clinical Trial Data
The following undesirable effects were reported in placebo-controlled clinical trials for hydroxyzine and including 735 subjects exposed to hydroxyzine up to 50 mg daily.
Nervous system disorders
Very common: somnolence
Common: headache
Uncommon: dizziness, insomnia, disturbance in attention
Gastrointestinal disorders
Common: dry mouth
Uncommon: constipation, nausea
General disorders and administration site conditions
Common: fatigue
Uncommon: asthenia
Post Marketing Data
Immune system disorders
Not known: hypersensitivity, anaphylactic shock
Psychiatric disorders
Not known: agitation, confusion, disorientation, hallucination
Nervous system disorders
Not known: sedation, tremor, convulsions, dyskinesia
Eye disorders
Not known: drug metabolism
Cardiac disorders
Not known: tachycardia, electrocardiogram QT prolonged, torsades de pointes
Vascular disorders
Not known: hypotension

Respiratory, thoracic and mediastinal disorders
Not known: bronchospasm

Gastrointestinal disorders
Not known: vomiting

Hepatobiliary disorders
Not known: liver function tests abnormal

Skin and subcutaneous tissue disorders
Not known: pruritus, erythematous rash, maculo-papular rash, urticaria, dermatitis, angioneurotic oedema, hyperhidrosis, fixed drug eruption, acute generalized exanthematous pustulosis, erythema multiforme, Stevens-Johnson syndrome

Renal and urinary disorders
Not known: urinary retention

General disorders and administration site conditions
Not known: malaise, pyrexia

The following adverse reactions have been observed with cetirizine, the principal metabolite of hydroxyzine:
- thrombocytopenia
- aggression
- depression
- tic, dystonia
- paraesthesia
- oculogyric crisis
- diarrhoea
- dysuria
- enuresis
- asthenia
- oedema
- weight increased and could potentially occur with hydroxyzine.

OVERDOSAGE AND TREATMENT

Symptoms and signs
Symptoms observed after an important overdose are mainly associated with excessive anticholinergic load, Central Nervous System (CNS) depression or CNS paradoxical stimulation. They include nausea, vomiting, tachycardia, pyrexia, somnolence, impaired pupillary reflex, tremor, confusion, or hallucination. This may be followed by depressed level of consciousness, respiratory depression, convulsions, hypotension, or cardiac arrhythmia. Deepening coma and cardiorespiratory collapse may ensue.

Treatment
Airway, breathing and circulatory status must be closely monitored with continuous ECG recording and an adequate oxygen supply should be available. Cardiac and blood pressure monitoring should be maintained until the patient is free of symptoms for 24 hours. Patients with altered mental status should be checked for simultaneous intake of other drugs or alcohol and should be given oxygen, naloxone, glucose, and thiamine if deemed necessary.

Norepinephrine or metaraminol should be used if vasopressor is needed. Epinephrine should not be used. Syrup of ipecac should not be administered in symptomatic patients or those who could rapidly become obtunded, comatose or convulsing, as this could lead to aspiration pneumonitis. Activated charcoal may be left in the stomach but there are scant data to support its efficacy.

It is doubtful that haemodialysis or haemoperfusion would be of any value.

There is no specific antidote.

Literature data indicate that, in the presence of severe, life-threatening, intractable anticholinergic effects unresponsive to other agents, a therapeutic trial dose of physostigmine may be useful. Physostigmine should not be used just to keep the patient awake. If cyclic antidepressants have been co-ingested, use of physostigmine may precipitate seizures and intractable cardiac arrest. Also avoid physostigmine in patients with cardiac conduction defects.

STORAGE CONDITIONS
Store at temperatures not exceeding 25°C.

AVAILABILITY
*Hydroxyzine dihydrochloride (Iterax®) 10 mg tablet: 10 tablets per blister (box of 100’s)
*Hydroxyzine dihydrochloride (Iterax®) 25 mg tablet: 25 tablets per blister (box of 100’s)
**Hydroxyzine dihydrochloride (Iterax®) 2 mg/mL syrup: glass bottle of 100 mL

CAUTION
Foods, Drugs, Devices and Cosmetics Act prohibits dispensing without prescription. Keep all medicines out of reach of children.

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GlaxoSmithKline

Imported by:
GlaxoSmithKline Philippines Inc
2266 Chino Roces Avenue
1231 City of Makati
Tel. 892 0761

*Mfg by:
UCB Pharma S.A.
Braine-L’Alleud, Belgium