

Amikacin

Why is this medication prescribed?

This medication is used alone or with other medications to prevent certain infections or to treat a wide variety of serious bacterial infections. Amikacin belongs to a class of drugs known as aminoglycoside antibiotics. It works by killing the bacteria that causes the infection.

How should this medicine be used?

This medication is usually given by injection into a vein or a muscle (every 8 hours to once a day) or exactly as directed by your doctor.

Dosage is based on the kind of infection, your weight, kidney function, medical condition, amikacin blood levels, and response to treatment. The length of treatment depends on the infection but is usually 7 to 10 days.

This medication may be used either in the hospital or in the home supervised by an infusion service. This medicine is available in several sizes of vials and disposable syringes. Follow the medicine package instructions exactly for mixing and giving this medication. Before mixing the solution, check it for cloudiness or particles. Check the medication again after it has been mixed with the dilution fluid in the IV bag. If cloudiness or particles are present at any time, do not use the liquid. Do not mix this antibiotic with any other antibiotics in the same IV bag. Do not give this medication through the same IV tubing with another antibiotic at the same time or afterward unless told to do so by your pharmacist.

Tell your doctor immediately if your infection symptoms return (e.g., fever, chills, body aches) while using this medication or after stopping it.

Other uses for this medicine

This drug may also rarely be used with other medications to treat resistant tuberculosis.

What special precautions should I follow?

Before using amikacin injection, tell your doctor or pharmacist if you are allergic to it; or to other aminoglycoside antibiotics (e.g., tobramycin, gentamicin); or if you are allergic to sulfites; or if you have any other allergies.

Before using this medication, tell your doctor or pharmacist your medical history, especially of: kidney problems, hearing problems, immune system problems, dehydration, nausea/vomiting, low blood minerals (e.g., potassium, magnesium, calcium), myasthenia gravis, Parkinson's disease, burns over a large area of skin, cystic fibrosis.

Before having surgery, tell your doctor or dentist that you are using this medication.

Caution is advised when using this drug in the elderly because they may have decreased kidney function due to aging and may, therefore, be more sensitive to the kidney and hearing side effects.

Amikacin is not recommended for use during pregnancy. Consult your doctor for more details. It is not known whether this drug passes into breast milk. Consult your doctor before breast-feeding.

What should I do if I forget a dose?

Contact your doctor if a dose is missed.

What side effects can this medication cause?

If you experience any of the following serious side effects, stop taking amikacin and seek emergency medical attention:

- an allergic reaction (shortness of breath; closing of the throat; hives; swelling of the lips, face, or tongue; rash; or fainting);
- little or no urine;
- decreased hearing or ringing in the ears;
- dizziness, clumsiness, or unsteadiness;
- numbness, skin tingling, muscle twitching, or seizures; or
- severe watery diarrhea and abdominal cramps.

Other, less serious side effects may be more likely to occur. Continue to take amikacin and talk to your doctor if you experience

- increased thirst;
- loss of appetite;
- nausea or vomiting;
- a rash.

What storage conditions are needed for this medicine?

Store at room temperature between 20-25 degrees C away from light. Keep all medicines away from children and pets.

In case of emergency/overdose

Contact your doctor or seek emergency medical attention if an overdose is suspected. An overdose of the medication may result in damage to the kidneys or hearing loss, dizziness, numbness, skin tingling, muscle twitching, or seizures (which may be signs of nerve damage).

What other information should I know?

If you are injecting amikacin at home, your healthcare provider will give you detailed instructions on how and where to inject the medication. If you do not understand these directions, do not attempt to inject the medication. Contact your healthcare provider for further instructions.

Amikacin may cause damage to the kidneys and/or nerves.