

# Atarax (hydroxyzine) basics

**Relieves anxiety and itching.** Atarax (hydroxyzine) effectively relieves itching caused by an allergic reaction. It can also help alleviate anxiety, but isn't a first choice medicine and can make you very sleepy.

## What to expect when starting

Here's when people typically experience benefits as well as some possible side effects. Your experience may be different.

|   | Hours | Days | Weeks | Months | Long term |
|---|-------|------|-------|--------|-----------|
| <b>Atarax (hydroxyzine)</b><br>Drug effectiveness |       |      |       |        |           |
| <b>Possible side effects†</b>                     |       |      |       |        |           |
| <b>Dry mouth</b>                                  |       |      |       |        |           |
| <b>Drowsiness</b>                                 |       |      |       |        |           |
| <b>Headache</b>                                   |       |      |       |        |           |
| <b>Hallucination</b>                              |       |      |       |        |           |
| <b>Itching</b>                                    |       |      |       |        |           |
| <b>Rash</b>                                       |       |      |       |        |           |

† Data on frequency of side effects is not available.

## Tips from pharmacists

- Atarax (hydroxyzine) often causes extreme drowsiness or dizziness. Don't mix with other medicines that cause drowsiness like other antihistamines, pain or sleep medications, or alcohol.
- Side effects are more likely in older adults, young children, or those with kidney problems, and may require lower doses.
- Takes 15 to 30 minutes to start working, and about 2 hours for the full effects if you're taking it for itching or a rash.
- Shake suspension vigorously before taking.
- Can be taken with or without food.

## Risks and warnings

Contact your doctor if you experience any of these.

### Impaired alertness

Atarax (hydroxyzine) can lower your ability to focus, think, and react. Avoid activities that require you to be alert, such as driving a car or operating machinery, until you know how this medication affects you. Ask a doctor or pharmacist before using Atarax (hydroxyzine) if you are taking tranquilizers or sedatives.

### Heart rhythm problems

Atarax (hydroxyzine) can affect your heart rhythm. If you have heart rhythm problems or taking other drugs that affect your heart, talk to your doctor before starting this medicine.

### Severe skin reaction

In rare cases, Atarax (hydroxyzine) can cause a serious skin reaction, called acute generalized exanthematous pustulosis (AGEP), that looks like a rash and small blisters usually on the face or on skin folds. Using moisturizers and corticosteroid creams may help relieve the rash. Stop this medicine and talk to your doctor if you experience these symptoms.