

# Amiodarone

Amiodarone is a medication that helps in the management of heart rhythm abnormalities. It is a very effective medication but can produce side effects which your doctor will need to monitor. Amiodarone is used to help keep the heart in its normal (sinus) rhythm. It is also used when the heart has changed its rhythm (arrhythmia) to help it return to normal rhythm.

## Side Effects

Although generally well tolerated amiodarone does have side effects that can affect different parts of our body.

### Skin

When taking amiodarone the skin can take on a greyish/blue tinge. This will settle on stopping amiodarone but can take a long time. While taking amiodarone you may become more sensitive to sunburn. Using sunblock and hats appears to prevent this side effect. Because amiodarone remains in the body for a long time it may be necessary to continue using sun block for a few months after stopping amiodarone.

### Thyroid Gland

The thyroid gland produces a hormone which controls the body's metabolism. Amiodarone can affect this gland making it both over active (this occurs in about 2% of people taking amiodarone) or under active (this occurs in about 6% of people taking amiodarone). Your doctor will take regular blood tests to check if either of these has developed. If you experience symptoms of extreme tiredness or restlessness you should contact your general practitioner in normal surgery to discuss this. The doctor will arrange for you to have blood tests if these have not already been done. Both an overactive and underactive thyroid can easily be treated with medicines.



Acknowledgements: Dr Matthew Fay, GP  
Endorsed by: Dr Michael Davis, Dr Gerry Kaye



**AF-A Australia Medical Advisory Committee:** Dr Michael Davis Professor Ben Freedman Dr Gerry Kaye

**Founder & CEO:** Mrs Trudie Lobban MBE **Deputy CEO:** Mrs Jo Jerome

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