

Patient information

Desmopressin DDAVP to Treat Patients with Bleeding Disorders

Haematology Liverpool

What is desmopressin?

Desmopressin (DDAVP) is a man-made substance that acts similar to an anti-diuretic hormone, produced naturally by the body. Desmopressin is used to treat patients with mild to moderate Haemophilia A or von Willebrand Disease.

How is desmopressin given?

Desmopressin can be given as a slow intravenous infusion (drip) or by a injection given subcutaneously (under the skin). Your first dose is always given intravenously. We will need to know your current weight as dosage is calculated according to your weight. Your blood pressure and pulse will be monitored.

What are the benefits of desmopressin?

Desmopressin works by increasing the levels of Factor VIII and von Willebrand factor into the circulation to help the clotting process following trauma or before surgery, for example gastroscopy or dental extractions where patients are at risk of bleeding. A blood sample will be taken before the first administration of desmopressin and approximately 30 minutes after the infusion, to assess your response. This is known as a desmopressin (DDAVP) challenge.

What are the risks of having desmopressin?

The most common side effects include fluid retention, headaches, abdominal pain, nausea, facial flushing and palpitations.

Other side effects that have been reported are isolated cases of allergic skin reactions, and more seriously patients have suffered from fits. Low blood pressure and increase in the heart rate have also been reported.

Please inform medical/nursing staff if you suffer from hypertension (high blood pressure), heart disease, renal disease, take anti-depressants or have any of the above side effects.

We advise that all patients who have received desmopressin restrict their fluid intake. Please avoid alcohol during this time.

- For eight hours after your infusion, satisfy thirst only (two small cups).
- For the next 16 hours after your infusion – restrict fluid intake to one and a half litres (approximately ten small cups of fluid).

Will I need any other treatment with desmopressin?

You may be given tranexamic acid tablets to increase the effect of the desmopressin and prevent breakdown of the fibrin clot. These are usually taken for five to seven days and you will be given a prescription if needed.

Feedback

Your feedback is important to us and helps us influence care in the future.

Following your discharge from hospital or attendance at your outpatient appointment you will receive a text asking if you would recommend our service to others. Please take the time to text back, you will not be charged for the text and can opt out at any point. Your co-operation is greatly appreciated.

Further information

If you have any further questions, please ask a member of our medical / nursing team. Please contact the haemophilia team.

Monday – Friday

9am - 5pm

Tel: 0151 706 3397

Useful Websites

The Haemophilia Society:

<https://haemophilia.org.uk/>.

World Federation of Haemophilia:

www.wfh.org.

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All Trust approved information is available on request in alternative formats, including other languages, easy read, large print, audio, Braille, moon and electronically.

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