Jeffrey Panko NP
PSYCHIATRY

Jeffrey Panko, PMHNP-BC
Phone 646-549-4694 | Fax 646-558-4238
JMPankoNP@JeffreyPanko.com
jeffreypanko.com

PATIENT EDUCATION

Guanfacine

Intuniv extended-release / Tenex or generic immediate-release tablets

A guide for adults taking guanfacine.
Follow the directions on your prescription and your provider's recommendations.

DO NOT STOP SUDDENLY | IR AND ER ARE NOT INTERCHANGEABLE

Formulations: Immediate-release and extended-release tablets are not interchangeable milligram for milligram. Switching requires a new schedule.

What it is used for

Extended-release guanfacine is used for ADHD, alone or with a stimulant; the U.S. evidence and labeling primarily concern children and adolescents. Adult ADHD treatment is generally off-label. Immediate-release guanfacine is approved for high blood pressure.

How it works

It stimulates alpha-2A receptors involved in attention and regulation of arousal. It also reduces signals that maintain blood pressure and pulse.

What to expect over time

Sedation and blood-pressure effects may appear early. Attention or impulse-control benefit is assessed over several weeks while the dose is adjusted.

Taking your medication

- Swallow ER tablets whole; do not break, crush, or chew.
- Take ER once daily as prescribed and avoid taking it with a high-fat meal.
- Do not double a missed dose. After two or more consecutive missed doses, contact your provider before restarting.
- Do not stop suddenly; a gradual reduction helps prevent rebound high blood pressure.

Jeffrey Panko NP
PSYCHIATRY

Jeffrey Panko, PMHNP-BC
Phone 646-549-4694 | Fax 646-558-4238
JMPankoNP@JeffreyPanko.com
jeffreypanko.com

Side effects and safety

Possible side effects

- Sleepiness or fatigue
- Dizziness or low blood pressure
- Dry mouth, constipation, or headache
- Slow pulse

Keeping track of treatment

Some side effects resolve with time; others may require a change of medication. Discuss persistent or bothersome side effects with your provider.

Have blood pressure and pulse checked before treatment, after dose increases, and periodically. Track alertness, falls, sleep, and the ADHD symptoms being treated.

If you take too much

For a suspected overdose, call Poison Control at **1-800-222-1222** immediately, even if you feel well. Call 911 for a seizure, collapse, trouble breathing, or inability to wake.

Before you start

Discuss fainting, low blood pressure, slow pulse, heart block, and kidney or liver problems. Avoid dehydration and overheating.

Discuss pregnancy, pregnancy plans, and breastfeeding with your provider. Treatment decisions should consider both the medication and the condition being treated.

Medicines and interactions

Review all your medications with your provider, including over-the-counter medicines and supplements. Have new medications checked before taking them.

CYP3A inhibitors or inducers can require a dose adjustment. Review grapefruit, certain antibiotics or antifungals, and seizure medicines.

Alcohol and other sedatives increase impairment. Blood-pressure or heart-rate medicines can add low pulse or fainting.

Jeffrey Panko NP
PSYCHIATRY

Jeffrey Panko, PMHNP-BC
Phone 646-549-4694 | Fax 646-558-4238
JMPankoNP@JeffreyPanko.com
jeffreypanko.com

GUANFACINE / 03

Living with your treatment

When to get help

Emergency symptoms. Get emergency care for collapse, severe breathing difficulty, or severe headache with chest pain or neurologic symptoms after stopping.

Prompt medical advice. Report fainting, persistent dizziness, an unusually slow pulse, or excessive sedation. Contact your provider if illness prevents regular dosing.

If you feel unsafe or have thoughts of self-harm, call 911 or go to an emergency department.

Your questions answered

Can I stop once ADHD symptoms improve?
Consult with your provider. Sudden stopping can raise blood pressure even when the medication was prescribed for ADHD.

Can I use my old immediate-release dose instead?
No. The release patterns differ, so a switch requires specific instructions.

Everyday tips

Plan refills early and keep a record of missed doses.

Stand up slowly and avoid driving when drowsy.

Storage and safety

Keep medication in its labeled container, away from excess heat and moisture and out of reach of children and pets. Do not share it. Ask a pharmacy about disposal of unused medication.

Sources

DailyMed: Intuniv prescribing information

Educational handout; does not replace your prescription or provider's recommendations.