

A large, white, serif 'RX' logo is centered within a dark gray square box in the top right corner of the page.

**Drug Name:** Haloperidol

**Trade Name:** Haldol

**Class:**

High-potency antipsychotic  
Major tranquilizer

**Mechanism of Action:**

Blocks postsynaptic dopamine receptors (D<sub>2</sub>) in the mesolimbic system (associated with mood & behavior).

The decrease in dopamine neurotransmission has been found to correlate with the antipsychotic effects.

Haloperidol possesses extremely weak anticholinergic and alpha-adrenergic receptor blocking effects.

**Indications:**

- Acute Psychosis (Consideration for patient & rescuer safety)

**Contraindications:**

Coma

Severe toxic CNS depression

Parkinson's disease (*dopamine blockade can dramatically worsen the condition*)

**Precautions:**

- Severe cardiovascular disorders (*EKG monitoring is recommended in these patients*)
- Pregnancy (C)
- Seizure disorder (*slight lowering of seizure threshold*)
- Elderly patients may require reduce dosage

**Available Forms:**

- 5 mg/ml (5 mg) in 1.0 ml ampules

**Dosage:**

**Adults:**

- 5-10 mg IV or IM maximum dosage 20 mg (reduce dosage to 0.5 to 2 mg in geriatrics)

**Pediatrics:**

- 0.5 mg IM (***Not covered in ACEMSS SWO's***)
- One reference suggested in children 6-12 years of age: 1-3 mg IV or IM (***Not covered in ACEMSS SWO's***)

**Onset:**

IM—10-20 minutes (one reference suggests 30-60 minutes)

IV—Data not available since it is not an FDA approved use

**Duration:**

- 12-24 hours

**Side Effects:**

Extrapyramidal reactions

Neuroleptic malignant syndrome (*hyperthermia, severe extrapyramidal dysfunction, alterations in consciousness, altered mental status, and autonomic instability*)

Orthostatic hypotension

Insomnia, restlessness

Sedation

Seizures

Respiratory depression

**DRUG: HALOPERIDOL**

RX

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**Side Effects:** *Continued*

Anticholinergic effects  
Tachycardia

**Interactions:**

Additive effects—may induce hypotension in patients taking antihypertensives  
May decrease the activity of warfarin  
Patients taking lithium may develop encephalopathic syndrome

**PEARLS:**

***IM dosage may take 10-20 minutes (or longer) to take effect. Make sure you have plenty of help on scene.***

**Use of Haldol with patients under the active influence of hyperdynamics is relatively contraindicated due to these drugs effects on seizure threshold, heat production and general side effects that may complicate care.**