

## Desmopressin (DDAVP®) for bleeding disorders

### How does this medicine work?

Desmopressin (DDAVP) is used to help stop bleeding in patients with von Willebrand's disease or mild hemophilia A.

DDAVP causes the release of von Willebrand's antigen from the platelets and the cells that line the blood vessels where it is stored. Von Willebrand's antigen is the protein that carries factor VIII. This increase in von Willebrand's antigen and factor VIII helps to stop bleeding.

The medicine begins to work quickly, with peak effect in 60 minutes. The effect may last 8 to 12 hours or longer.

### How is the medicine given?

DDAVP is given into a vein (IV) for about 30 minutes in the clinic, short stay unit, or hospital. It is given 30 minutes before surgery, or right away if bleeding occurs.

DDAVP can be given as often as once a day. The dose is specific to each individual patient and situation.

### Are there any precautions for my child's diet?

After a dose of DDAVP, fluids need to be restricted for 18 to 24 hours. The doctor or nurse will give you more specific directions. There are no restrictions for solid foods.

### What are the side effects?

- |            |  |
|------------|--|
| Common     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• fluid retention</li><li>• redness and warmth in face</li></ul>   |
| Occasional | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• runny or stuffy nose</li><li>• headache</li><li>• nausea (upset stomach)</li><li>• dizziness</li><li>• faster heart rate</li><li>• pain, redness, or swelling at the IV site</li></ul> |
| Rare       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• slight increase or decrease in blood pressure</li><li>• blood clots in undesired areas</li><li>• seizure</li></ul>   |

### When should I call the doctor?

- headaches or other pain not relieved by acetaminophen (such as Tylenol®)
- faster heart rate
- rapid weight gain
- continued bleeding
- dizziness
- vision problems
- confusion
- seizures
- signs of an allergic reaction:
  - fever or chills
  - rash or hives
  - wheezing
  - trouble breathing - **call 911**

## What else do I need to know?

DDAVP should not be used by any patient who has heart problems or who has ever had a blood clot.

DDAVP may not be effective for all patients. The health care provider may recommend a DDAVP challenge test to see if it works. This is done by giving a dose and then testing the blood at different times.

Many of the side effects that can occur with the IV form of DDAVP can be decreased by changing the dose or switching to the nasal form of desmopressin if possible.

You and your child should know the names of all the medicines he or she is taking. **Share this information** with anyone involved in your child's care.

## Questions?

This sheet is not specific to your child but provides general information. If you have any questions, please call the hematology / oncology clinic or pharmacy.

For more reading material about this and other health topics, please call or visit the Family Resource Center library, or visit our Web site: [www.childrensmn.org](http://www.childrensmn.org).

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