

MEDICATION INFO SHEET  
**PILOCARPINE**  
**(pie-low-KAR-peen)**

**Other Names for this Medication:** Salagen (Brand Name)

**Appearance:**

White tablet with pilocarpine 5mg

**Why this Medication is Used:**

Pilocarpine is used for the treatment of dry mouth after radiation treatment to the head and neck area, or from certain other medical problems. The drug stimulates your salivary glands to make saliva. For more information on things you can do to help with dry mouth, see the pamphlet “*Mouth Care*”.

**How do you take this Medication:**

Pilocarpine tablets are taken by mouth, with a full glass of water.

**Precautions:**

- It is important to tell your doctor if you have any other medical problems, especially asthma, gallbladder problems, heart or blood vessel disease, glaucoma or other problems with your eyes, or kidney problems.
- It is important to let your doctor know if you are taking other medicine at the same time as Pilocarpine. Many medications, including some non-prescription medications, can interact with this drug.
- This medication may cause you to sweat more than normal. If this happens, it is important for you to drink plenty of fluids, to replace the water lost through sweat. This is especially important during hot or humid weather.
- If you miss a dose of this medication, take the dose as soon as possible. However, if it is time for the next dose, do not double dose.
- Pilocarpine should not be used if you are pregnant or breast-feeding. It is important to discuss birth control with your doctor.
- Store this medication in a cool dark place, and *out of the reach of children*.

For more information on this medication, please call your doctor or nurse,  
or the Cancer Centre Drug Information pharmacist.

**SIDE EFFECTS****PREVENTION****WHAT YOU SHOULD DO****MORE COMMON:**

- Sweating

- Drink plenty of fluids.
- Tell your doctor or nurse if this bothers you.

**RARE:**

- Fast heartbeat
- Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, indigestion
- Redness in face; swelling of fingers, ankles, feet or face
- Water retention, increased urine
- Runny nose or nosebleeds
- Trouble seeing
- Trembling, shaking, dizziness, chills, weakness

- Get up slowly, move slowly.

- Tell your doctor or nurse at your next visit if any of these symptoms bother you.
- Don't drive a car or operate machinery if you are dizzy or weak.
- Tell your doctor or nurse at your next visit if any of these symptoms bother you.

**SIGNS OF OVERDOSE**

- Chest pain, shortness of breath,
- Slow or irregular heartbeats which continue for some time or are severe
- Severe diarrhea, nausea or vomiting
- Confusion, severe headache or trembling/shakiness
- Stomach cramps or pain
- Great difficulty with vision, severe weakness

- Call your doctor as soon as possible, You may need to have the medication dose reduced or stopped.
- Overdoses are rare, but must be dealt with promptly.