

CONSUMER MEDICINE INFORMATION

WHAT IS IN THIS LEAFLET?

This leaflet contains information about Taipan Antivenom. Please read it carefully and keep it for future reference. The information in this leaflet is only a summary and is not intended to replace advice from your doctor.

Please consult your doctor or pharmacist if you have any comments or questions.

WHAT IS TAIPAN ANTIVENOM?

Taipan Antivenom is an injection designed to help neutralise the effect of the poison (venom) of the taipan. The taipan is one of the most poisonous snakes in the world. The antivenom is produced by immunising horses against the venom of the taipan snake and then collecting that part of the horse's blood which neutralises this poison. The antivenom is purified and made into an injection for those people who may need it after being bitten by a taipan.

WHEN IS TAIPAN ANTIVENOM USED?

Taipan Antivenom is given to those people who become ill after being bitten by a taipan.

Not every one who is bitten needs to have the antivenom as some people have only very mild effects from the bite or none at all. However, some people can become extremely ill after being bitten and in these people it is essential to use an appropriate amount of antivenom to counteract the effects of the poison. Several people die in Australia each

year from inadequately treated snake bite.

WHO SHOULD NOT HAVE THE ANTIVENOM?

As there are sometimes unpleasant and dangerous reactions to the antivenom (see SIDE EFFECTS OF TAIPAN ANTIVENOM) it should not be given to people who have no effects from the bite. However as Taipan Antivenom can be an emergency life-saving product, it should not be withheld from anyone who needs it.

BEFORE YOU HAVE TAIPAN ANTIVENOM

Before you have the injection, you should tell your doctor if:

- you are an asthmatic
- you suffer from hayfever
- you suffer from any other allergies
- you have ever received injections containing horse serum (snake bite and other antivenoms)
- you had an anti-tetanus injection before 1974
- you are suffering from any other illness
- you are taking any medicines and what they are
- you are pregnant
- you are breast feeding.

When medicines are produced in animals and injected into you, it is always possible that viruses or other substances could be present in the medicine and cause an illness. These could be viruses or other infectious agents which may not yet have been discovered. In the past, there have been no reports of this ever having happened with this product.

SIDE EFFECTS OF TAIPAN ANTIVENOM

As with any medicine, some side effects may occur.

As the injection is made from horse serum, side effects occur most commonly in those who have allergies, particularly if they have ever had injections before which were also prepared from horses. Allergic reactions such as rashes, low blood pressure, wheezing and palpitations occur commonly. Headaches and fever are also common. Less commonly, localised swelling, muscle and joint pains, abdominal pain, vomiting, chest pain and blue discolouration of the skin can occur. The allergic reactions can be very severe and can cause death, but allergic complications can be treated by your doctor.

An illness consisting of a rash, swollen glands, joint pains and a fever may occur about a week after the injection.

Always tell your doctor if you have any unpleasant effects after receiving Taipan Antivenom.

THE DOSE OF TAIPAN ANTIVENOM

The dose for both adults and children is one or more vials depending on the severity of the condition. The injection is considerably diluted. The dose can be repeated as necessary. Your doctor will take precautions to counteract any allergic reactions if they should happen.

OVERDOSE

There is no information on overdose.

WHAT DOES TAIPAN ANTIVENOM CONTAIN?

Taipan Antivenom contains 12,000 units of antivenom in about 45 mL of liquid. Each injection also contains phenol as a preservative, sodium chloride and substances found in horse blood.

The Australian Registration Number is Aust R 74898.

HOW TO STORE TAIPAN ANTIVENOM

Taipan Antivenom should be protected from light and stored at 2-8°C (in the refrigerator). It must not be frozen. It should not be used after the expiry date on the package.

WHERE CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION?

You can get more information from your doctor or pharmacist.

Taipan Antivenom is manufactured by:

CSL Limited
ABN 99 051 588 348
45 Poplar Road
Parkville 3052
Victoria Australia

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