

# Intuniv

(guanfacine ER)

[Full Prescribing Information](#)

[DailyMed Drug Information](#)

## Forms/Strengths

- **Tablets:** 1 mg, 2 mg, 3 mg, 4 mg

## Dosing

- **Age:**  $\geq 6$  y/o
- **Duration:** ~ 24 hours
- **Considerations:** Avoid high-fat meals; do not crush, chew, or break tablets
- **Initial Dose:** 1 mg daily
- **Titration:** 1 mg/week
- **Max Dose:**
  - **25 - 33.9 kg:** 2 - 3 mg/day
  - **34 - 41.4 kg:** 2 - 4 mg/day
  - **41.5 - 49.4 kg:** 3 - 5 mg/day
  - **49.5 - 58.4 kg:** 3 - 6 mg/day
  - **58.5 - 91 kg:** 4 - 7 mg/day
  - **91+ kg:** 5 - 7 mg/day

## Quick Facts

- Guanfacine (Intuniv) is a selective alpha-2A adrenergic receptor agonist; enhances prefrontal cortex regulation
- Reduces impulsivity and hyperactivity; may be less effective for inattention
- Non-stimulant option for ADHD; useful as adjunct therapy with stimulants
- Primarily metabolized by CYP3A4; dose adjustments may be necessary with CYP3A4 inhibitors or inducers

- Common side effects: drowsiness, fatigue, hypotension, dry mouth
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## Indications

- **ADHD** (ICD-10: F90.0)
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## Off-Label Uses

- **Oppositional Defiant Disorder (F91.3):** May help manage irritability, anger outbursts, and impulsive aggression.
  - **Anxiety Disorders (F41.9):** Sometimes used to reduce symptoms of anxiety and related somatic complaints.
  - **Tic Disorders/Tourette's Syndrome (F95.2):** Occasionally employed off-label to help reduce tics.
  - **Autism Spectrum Disorder-Associated Irritability (F84.0):** May help in managing irritability and aggression in some cases.
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## How to Take

- Take **once daily**, preferably at **the same time each day**.
  - **Swallow the tablet whole**; do not crush, chew, or split.
  - Take **with or without food**, but be consistent with food intake to maintain stable absorption.
  - If a **dose is missed**, take it as soon as possible unless it is close to the next dose—do not double up.
  - **Do not abruptly stop** taking; tapering may be required to prevent **rebound hypertension**.
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## Side Effects

- Common: Sedation, somnolence, headache, abdominal pain, hypotension, bradycardia.  
Serious: Syncope, rebound hypertension, cardiac conduction abnormalitie
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## Monitoring / Labs

- **Cardiovascular:** Baseline and routine monitoring of heart rate and blood pressure.
  - **Psychiatric Symptoms:** Observe for mood changes, anxiety, or psychosis.
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## Education

- **When to Call the Doctor:**
    - Severe **dizziness, fainting, or low blood pressure**.
    - Slow or irregular heart rate.
    - Excessive drowsiness or difficulty waking.
    - Mood changes, depression, or unusual behavior.
    - Severe headache, blurred vision, or confusion (**possible hypertensive rebound if stopped abruptly**).
  - **Safety Tips:**
    - **Monitor blood pressure and heart rate** regularly.
    - Avoid **alcohol and sedatives**, which may enhance drowsiness.
    - Rise slowly from sitting or lying positions to prevent dizziness.
    - Use caution when driving or operating heavy machinery due to possible sedation.
    - **Taper gradually** when discontinuing to avoid withdrawal symptoms.
  - **Parent Tips for Pediatric Patients:**
    - May cause **daytime drowsiness**; consider giving the **dose at bedtime** if drowsiness is problematic.
    - Monitor for **irritability, mood swings, or behavioral changes**.
    - Encourage **hydration and balanced nutrition** to minimize side effects.
    - Ensure children do not engage in **high-risk activities (e.g., swimming, biking) if excessively drowsy**.
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## Additional Information

- **Contraindications:**
  - **Hypersensitivity** to guanfacine or formulation components.
  - Use with caution in patients with **severe heart disease, bradycardia, or hypotension**.
- **Pregnancy:**
  - **Category B**; no well-controlled studies in pregnant women, but animal studies suggest minimal risk.
- **Lactation:**
  - **Excreted in breast milk**; use with caution due to potential effects on infant blood pressure.
- **Drug Interactions:**
  - **CNS depressants** (e.g., alcohol, benzodiazepines) may increase sedation.
  - **Beta-blockers** may enhance bradycardia; caution when using together.
  - **Stimulants (e.g., amphetamines)** may counteract guanfacine's effects.

- **Antihypertensive medications** may lead to excessive blood pressure lowering.

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