Amiodarone

MEDICATION

THE DRUG

Class: class III anti-arrhythmic

Inhibits adrenergic stimulation; affects sodium, potassium, and calcium channels

Delays K+ efflux, depresses Na+ and Ca2+ influx; markedly prolongs action potential and repolarization

Decreases AV conduction and sinus node function; works in phase 3 to block potassium channels

USE IT FOR

- Pulseless ventricular fibrillation / ventricular tachycardia
- Ventricular arrhythmias
- Atrial fibrillation/flutter with RVR and hypotension
- WPW

DON'T GIVE / CAUTION

- Black box: indicated only for life-threatening arrhythmias — can cause pulmonary toxicity, liver injury, and worsening arrhythmia
- Hypersensitivity to the drug; cardiogenic shock; 2nd or 3rd degree AV block; symptomatic bradycardia
- Precaution: prolongs QT interval; consider slower administration with hepatic or renal dysfunction

DOSE

Adult: **AFib/flutter with hypotension: 150 mg over 10 min; VF/pulseless VT: 300 mg**

Peds: **Not stated on the page**

Repeat: **AFib: may repeat if rhythm continues or returns; VF/pulseless VT: repeat 150 mg**

WATCH FOR

- Dizziness
- Headache
- Malaise
- Hypotension

PEARLS

- Onset 30-45 minutes (per the page's pharmacokinetics panel)

Take Home Message:

Amiodarone is reserved for life-threatening arrhythmias: 300 mg in arrest, 150 mg over 10 minutes for unstable AFib/flutter.