

## ❖ DRUG PROFILES

Below is an alphabetised profile of medications to help you understand the information and the precautions to consider should you be taking these medications or the ingredient is listed in your medications that you take. People often believe that they are immune to any side effects of medications because they are readily available. However, it is important to always remember that they are chemicals and anything added into our body must be understood to appreciate it in full.

### 1. ALUMINIUM HYDROXIDE

#### What is it used for?

This is used as an antacid to neutralise the acid in the stomach, thereby reducing the burning and discomfort in the stomach.

#### When should I be careful?

- × It can cause constipation in some people therefore making stomach pains worse
- × If you have any disorders of the kidney, Aluminium can accumulate in the body and cause toxicity
- × If you take other medication you must separate them by 2 hours from Aluminium hydroxide

#### What are the common side effects?

- × Constipation can commonly occur
- × Cause obstruction in the intestines (rare)
- × Anaemia (rare)

#### What drug interactions might there be?

- × Separate from ALL medications by 2 hours as it can affect the absorption of them (Iron, Calcium, Anti-histamines)
- × It can interact with a range of medications, if taking long-term medication check with pharmacist before taking

#### Can I use if I am pregnant?

It is considered safe; ADEC category A when used at the recommended dose. However, Calcium carbonate is preferred due to the calcium possibly benefiting bone development in baby and assisting the mother.

#### Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?

There is unknown data; may be used after a feed at the lowest recommended dose for the shortest possible time. Monitor baby for any side effects and cease if present.

#### Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?

It appears to be safe. However, alcohol can increase acid secretion in the stomach so can make burning in the stomach worse and make this medication less effective defeating its purpose.

#### What other bits of information can you give me?

- ✓ This works best when taken 1 to 3 hours after a meal
- ✓ In a liquid form, it appears to work best.
- ✓ It has a slower onset of action compared to other ingredients

#### DOSAGE:

#### COMMON BRANDS:

##### Single ingredient:

- ✓ Alu-tab 600mg

##### Combination products:

- ✓ Gelusil
- ✓ Mylanta Original, Mylanta double strength, Mylanta P, Mylanta heartburn relief
- ✓ Gastrogel
- ✓ Gaviscon relief

## 2. AMOROLFINE

### What is it used for?

This is an anti-fungal agent used for fungal nail infections. It is considered first line therapy in the Therapeutic Guidelines for the treatment of fungal nail infections.

### When should I be careful?

- × Pregnancy
- × Breastfeeding
- × Do not use if it is not a fungal infection.
- × It is effective for superficial and distal infections, not when the nail matrix is involved

### What are the common side effects?

Side effects are rare since it is used topically, however rarely they can occur:

- × Burning and redness
- × Itching
- × Allergic reaction

### What drug interactions might there be?

There does not appear to be any known or significant interactions

### Can I use if I am pregnant?

No. It is ADEC category B3 and not recommended in any trimester.

### Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?

There is insufficient data, although it is applied topically it is recommended to avoid until more information is available.

### Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?

It appears to be safe.

### What other bits of information can you give me?

- ✓ It is important to be vigilant and use until the nail regrows, which can take up to 6 months for finger nails and 12 months for toe nails.
- ✓ Do not use any nail polish or varnish or artificial nails at all during treatment
- ✓ Do not share the product with other people, as cross infection with the applicator can occur
- ✓ Discard any nail varnish that you may have used with a fungal infection as you may become reinfected
- ✓ You must file the nail with files provided, and then clean the nail with the pad provided before applying the lacquer so that it can penetrate deeply into the nail on each application not just the first

### DOSAGE:

File and clean the nails with the products provided in the pack and then apply the lacquer TWICE WEEKLY for the first TWO WEEKS and then ONCE WEEKLY until the nail grows out healthy.

### COMMON BRANDS:

- ✓ Loceryl nail Lacquer

## 3. ASPIRIN

### What is it used for?

This is an NSAID that removes pain, fever and inflammation that also has the benefits of thinning the blood to prevent stroke and heart attack.

### When should I be careful?

- × Allergies to aspirin or other anti-inflammatories
- × Asthma sufferers may have their symptoms worsened if they are sensitive to aspirin
- × Stomach ulcers and burning symptoms in the stomach can be made worse with Aspirin, as it removes a protective chemical that normally is in the stomach lining.
- × It can cause fluid retention, therefore be careful if you have a heart or kidney disorder
- × Aspirin can make an acute attack of gout worse by increasing how much uric acid there is in the body
- × Do not use if there is any sign of bleeding
- × If undergoing surgery, check with the surgeon when to stop taking it. Ideally should be at least 7 days prior to surgery, but there is a risk of increasing risk of stroke/heart attack.
- × This is not to be used in children under 12 as it can cause Reye's Syndrome

- × Should not be used in children aged 12-16 with chicken pox, influenza or a fever either.

#### **What are the common side effects?**

- × Nausea, heartburn/indigestion, vomiting can occur
- × Stomach ulceration can occur
- × Dizziness
- × Headache
- × Tinnitus (common at high doses)
- × Can cause rash/itching in some people
- × Iron deficiency anaemia can occur
- × Allergy reactions can occur; runny nose, wheezing, tightness of the chest, worsening asthma and rash if sensitive.

#### **What drug interactions might there be?**

There are SEVERAL interactions so you must check with the pharmacist first before taking Aspirin. Some examples include;

- × The use of other anti-inflammatories both oral or topical
- × Blood pressure medication
- × Diuretics
- × Blood thinning medication

#### **Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It is ADEC category C, and is not recommended in pregnancy especially in the Third trimester. It can increase the risk of miscarriage and bleeding; however 100mg dosing may be considered safe on doctor's instructions only.

#### **Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

It is passed through breast milk and is not recommended; unless it is low dose on doctor's advice only. It can cause Reye's Syndrome in your child.

#### **Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

No, you should not have alcohol with Aspirin. It can affect the liver and kidneys and increase the burning in the stomach and possibly cause an ulcer.

#### **What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ You must take Aspirin with food without exception, even if it is enteric coated
- ✓ Stop if any signs of allergy occur
- ✓ Like all anti-inflammatories, some people respond well to one type and not another. It is trial and error to find the right one that suits you.
- ✓ You must stop taking it immediately if you have fluid retention, bleeding in the stools or are vomiting

#### **DOSAGE:**

Pain/inflammation/Fever: 300-900mg every 4 to 6 hours with food, with a maximum of 8 tablets per day

Thinning the blood: 100mg once daily with food

#### **COMMON BRANDS:**

##### 300mg strength:

- ✓ Solprin
- ✓ Aspro Clear
- ✓ Disprin, Disprin direct

##### Combination 300mg products + Codeine:

- ✓ Aspalgin
- ✓ Disprin Forte
- ✓ Codis

##### 100mg strength:

- ✓ Cartia (enteric coated)
- ✓ Astrix (tablets and capsules)
- ✓ Mayne Aspirin

#### **4. AZELAIC ACID**

#### **What is it used for?**

This is used for acne as it acts as a mild antibacterial and helps to break down skin cells.

**When should I be careful?**

- × If you have darker skin, you need to be careful as it can bleach or discolour the skin

**What are the common side effects?**

- × Itching, mild redness
- × Burning sensation of the skin
- × Scaliness and dryness
- × Skin discolouration

**What drug interactions might there be?**

There does not appear to be any known or significant interactions

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It is ADEC category B1 and there is limited data regarding safety. Using it topically presents lower risk; would only recommend short term use and only if really necessary.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

There is insufficient data however approximately 4% appears to be absorbed through the skin. Use only if necessary and for a short time. Never use on the nipple area directly.

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

It appears to be safe, especially since it used topically.

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ Vital to wash hands afterwards to avoid getting it into the eyes which can be dangerous
- ✓ Can cause drying, so use a non-perfumed and low irritant moisturiser
- ✓ If burning or redness occurs, do not use for a few days until it settles down. Consider only using once daily instead of twice.
- ✓ Results may be seen within 4 weeks; not instant so do not stop if no effect seen instantly.
- ✓ It can also be used to treat rosacea for up to 12 weeks

**DOSAGE:**

Apply to the affected area morning and night after washing and drying.

**COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Acnederm
- ✓ Finacea

**5. AZELASTINE**

**What is it used for?**

This is a topical antihistamine that is available in a nasal spray and eye-drop for allergy related reactions such as redness, watering, itching, and inflammation and sneezing.

**When should I be careful?**

- × If bleeding is occurring in the nose
- × Redness in the eyes that has not been diagnosed; i.e. do not guess that it is allergies. Only use if you are sure it is caused by an allergic reaction

**What are the common side effects?**

- × Local irritation
- × Can cause nosebleeds
- × Headache
- × Bitter taste
- × Stinging when used in the eye

**What drug interactions might there be?**

There does not appear to be any known or significant interactions

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It is ADEC category B3, and is not recommended to be used in pregnancy in any trimester.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

There is limited data and although likely to be safe it is not certain so therefore avoided.

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

Although used topically it can be absorbed through the nasal and eye passages and may cause increased drowsiness and increased effects of alcohol. Care needs to be taken if driving. To minimise the systemic effects of eye drops, consider holding the tear ducts for 2 minutes after instilling the eye drops.

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ It should not be used if you wear contact lenses. Remove the lenses, put in the drops and replace the lenses after 15 minutes.
- ✓ Try to avoid the triggers for your allergies as much as possible

**DOSAGE:**

**NASAL SPRAY:**

Used over 6 years: 1 spray every 12 hours

**EYE DROPS:**

Used over 4 years: 1 drop every 12 hours and it can be increased to 1 drop four times a day if needed.

**COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Azep nasal spray
- ✓ Eyezep eye drops

**6. BECLOMETHASONE**

**What is it used for?**

This is a corticosteroid that is used topically in the nose as an anti-inflammatory, dry up mucus, reduce congestion and stop sneezing and itching symptoms caused by allergies.

**When should I be careful?**

- × All corticosteroids should be avoided if there is an infection, as it reduces the immune system and makes the infection worse
- × It should not be used if the sinus passages are bleeding as it can thin the passage and make bleeding worse (also bleeding may indicate an underlying infection and this is not to be used)
- × It should not be used if you have had recent nose surgery or trauma as corticosteroids can delay healing; unless advised by your doctor.

**What are the common side effects?**

- × Nasal stinging
- × Possible itching
- × Dry mouth, sore throat or bitter taste as it enters the mouth from nasal passages
- × Can cause nose bleeds
- × Allergic reactions are possible
- × Glaucoma and cataracts can occur if being used long term or excessively

**What drug interactions might there be?**

- × Although used topically it can be absorbed through the nasal passages and thus possible to have drug interactions. If taking long-term medication check with pharmacist before using it.

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It is ADEC category B3 but is considered safe to use in pregnancy for a short period of time and at the lowest dose to control symptoms. However, I would recommend the use of Budesonide which is ADEC category A and much safer to use.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

It is considered safe to use in breastfeeding. As usual, I would recommend dosing straight after a feed and monitoring baby for any changes.

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

It appears to be safe.

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ It seems to have the same effectiveness as other nasal steroids.
- ✓ It tends to work within 3 to 7 hours but the best effects are seen from using it for several days.

**DOSAGE:**

**ADULTS:** spray 2 sprays into the nostrils twice a day and then reduced to 1 spray twice daily once improved or once daily if the 24 hours formula is used

**CHILDREN 3-12:** 1 spray twice a day and then reduce to 1 spray once daily

**COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Beconase Allergy and hay fever control 12 hour

**7. BENZOYL PEROXIDE****What is it used for?**

This is an antibacterial that also can help to break down skin cells. It is commonly used to treat acne or other bacterial related skin issues.

**When should I be careful?**

- × It should not be applied to broken or inflamed skin as it can make it more red and irritated
- × Be careful with clothing or fabric as it can cause discolouration
- × Do not use in dermatitis or eczema as it may make symptoms worse

**What are the common side effects?**

- × It can be very drying on the skin and cause it to peel and flake
- × It can feel warm on the area you have applied it
- × Can cause redness and inflammation

**What drug interactions might there be?**

There does not appear to be any known or significant interactions

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It does not have an ADEC category, but is considered safe to use.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

It is considered safe to use whilst breast-feeding.

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

It appears to be safe to use.

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ It is important to apply the product to washed and dry skin first
- ✓ Start using the lowest strength first (2.5%, 5% and 10%) and slowly increase the strength only if needed; otherwise it can cause irritation to the skin.
- ✓ You will need to use the product for at least 6 weeks to see the full efficacy of the product

**DOSAGE:**

Start with 2.5% strength then increase to 5% and then 10 % only if needed. Apply to the affected area ONCE or TWICE a DAY.

**COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Brevoxyl (4% strength)
- ✓ Clean and Clear continuous acne control cleanser (5% strength)
- ✓ Clearasil ultra-acne treatment cream (5% strength)
- ✓ Benzac (2.5% gel, 5% gel or wash, 10% gel)
- ✓ Panoxyl gel (5 or 10%)
- ✓ Oxy vanishing cream (5 or 10% strength)

**8. BIFONAZOLE****What is it used for?**

This is a topical anti-fungal cream that is used to kill the fungus and stop more from growing.

**When should I be careful?**

- × If it is not a fungal infection on the skin; misdiagnosed by yourself if not seen by a physician

**What are the common side effects?**

There are not a lot of side effects that have been reported through its use;

- x Burning and stinging to the skin
- x Possible redness due to allergic reactions

**What drug interactions might there be?**

- x Used topically this is unlikely to cause any interactions, however it is not impossible if large quantities are used. If taking any long-term medications check with the pharmacist before using it.

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

No. It is ADEC category B3 and is not the antifungal of choice. Clotrimazole and Miconazole are considered the safest to use.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

Limited data is present, although considered safe Clotrimazole and Miconazole appear to be safer to use.

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

It appears to be safe to use.

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ It does not appear to be more effective than the other anti-fungals it is just that using it only once a day means that compliance is higher which can ultimately cause greater success of treatment.
- ✓ It is vital with all anti-fungal treatments that you continue using for at least 2 weeks after symptoms disappear so that the fungus is completely treated.
- ✓ Follow all the skin fungal treatment advice on page ---

**DOSAGE:**

Apply to the affected area ONCE daily until symptoms resolve and for 2 weeks thereafter

**COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Canesten Once Daily Bifonazole cream

**9. BISACODYL**

**What is it used for?**

This is a stimulant laxative that is used to treat constipation on a short term basis only.

**When should I be careful?**

- x It can be habit forming so should ONLY be used short term (say 1 to 3 days consecutively to get the system back into a rhythm and then stop)
- x It is not to be used if there is any bowel obstruction unless on doctor's advice
- x It should not be used if there is any underlying inflammatory stomach or bowel conditions.
- x Be careful in the elderly population, as it may produce a violent effect and cause faecal incontinence which can be messy and embarrassing.

**What are the common side effects?**

- x It can cause diarrhoea or a violent effect which can be unpredictable
- x Can cause fluid and electrolyte loss if used excessively or long term which can cause dehydration
- x Cramps and stomach pains
- x Nausea

**What drug interactions might there be?**

*There does not appear to be any known or significant interactions*

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It is considered ADEC category A, but I normally do not recommend its use as it is a stimulant and its effects can be sudden and violent in nature. Use only for the SHORTEST time and at the lowest dose.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

It appears to be safe at the recommended dose. Monitor signs of the baby for any diarrhoea as indication to stop taking it.

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

It may cause dehydration if a violent effect is seen. I would advise to avoid it.

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ It can take 6-12 hours to see an effect if taking tablets
- ✓ It can take 5-15 minutes if using an enema
- ✓ It can take 15-60 minutes if using a suppository

**DOSAGE:**

**ADULT:**

Oral: 5-15 mg (1-3 tablets) at night for it to work in the morning

Rectal: 10mg (1 suppository) in the rectum ONCE daily when required

**CHILD:**

6 months-3 years: 1 5mg suppository in the rectum ONCE daily when required

3-12 years: 5-10mg (1-2 tablets) at night for it to work in the morning

5-10mg (0.5-1 suppository) in the rectum ONCE daily when required

**COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Bisalax 5mg tablet
- ✓ Dulcolax 5mg tablet
- ✓ Lax-Tab 5 mg tablet
- ✓ Dulcolax paediatric suppository 5mg suppository
- ✓ Dulcolax suppository 10 mg supp
- ✓ Bisacodyl suppository 10mg
- ✓ Bisalax enema 2mg/mL 5 mL enema (10mg)

**10. BROMHEXINE**

**What is it used for?**

This is a mucolytic which works to thin out the mucus that is on the chest to make it much easier to get rid of it.

**When should I be careful?**

- × If there is blood in the mucus or it is coloured; see your doctor as it could be an infection or worse
- × Monitor for signs of fever as this can also be a sign of a chest infection

**What are the common side effects?**

Although rare the possible side effects have been reported;

- × Nausea, vomiting or diarrhoea. Consider dosing after food as this may prevent it from occurring.
- × May develop allergic reactions.

**What drug interactions might there be?**

There does not appear to be any known or significant interactions

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It is ADEC category A and is considered safe to use.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

There is limited information, however may be recommended if the benefits to the mother outweigh the risks to the baby.

Monitor side effects in the baby.

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

It appears safe to use; however since alcohol dehydrates you it may affect the ability of the mucus to become thin and may delay your healing/recovery as you require adequate fluids during illness.

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ Try and drink a lot of water to help thin out the mucus to make it easier to expel. As well as this your body will recover more quickly.
- ✓ Not recommended for children under 6 any longer. Consider the use of Prospan or Brauer cough relief.

**DOSAGE:**

Adult: 8-16 mg three times daily

Child over 6: available on pharmacist's advice only now

**COMMON BRANDS:**Single ingredient:

- ✓ Bisolvin Chesty liquid 8mg/10mL
- ✓ Bisolvon Chesty Forte liquid 16mg/10mL
- ✓ Bisolvon chesty tablets and pastilles 8mg

Combination Products

- ✓ Benadryl Chesty Forte
- ✓ Duro-Tuss chesty forte

**11. BUDESONIDE****What is it used for?**

This is a corticosteroid that is used topically in the nose as an anti-inflammatory, dry up mucus, reduce congestion and stop sneezing and itching symptoms caused by allergies.

**When should I be careful?**

- × All corticosteroids should be avoided if there is an infection, as it reduces the immune system and makes the infection worse
- × It should not be used if the sinus passages are bleeding as it can thin the passage and make bleeding worse (also bleeding may indicate an underlying infection and this is not to be used)
- × It should not be used if you have had recent nose surgery or trauma as corticosteroids can delay healing; unless advised by your doctor.

**What are the common side effects?**

- × Nasal stinging
- × Possible itching
- × Dry mouth, sore throat or bitter taste as it enters the mouth from nasal passages
- × Can cause nose bleeds
- × Allergic reactions are possible
- × Glaucoma and cataracts can occur if being used long term or excessively

**What drug interactions might there be?**

- × Although used topically it can be absorbed through the nasal passages and thus possible to have drug interactions. If taking long-term medication check with pharmacist before using it.

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It is ADEC category A and is considered safe to use in pregnancy for a short period of time and at the lowest dose to control symptoms.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

It is considered safe to use in breastfeeding. As usual, I would recommend dosing straight after a feed and monitoring baby for any changes.

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

It appears to be safe.

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ It seems to have the same effectiveness as other nasal steroids.
- ✓ It tends to work within 3 to 7 hours but the best effects are seen from using it for several days.

**DOSAGE:**

This can be used in children over the age of 6:  
1-2 sprays once per day.

**COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Rhinocort Hay fever 32mcg 60 or 120 spray pack

**12. CALCIUM****What is it used for?**

This is an essential element needed for healthy bones, heart functioning and muscle contraction amongst other uses. It can be obtained from food sources, however when insufficient amounts are consumed then you will require supplementation.

**When should I be careful?**

- × If you have high amounts of calcium in your body then you should never take more
- × If you are taking antacids, then it can reduce the amount of calcium carbonate that can be absorbed
- × You need to separate calcium from all other medication by 2 hours
- × If you have any kidney disorders then you must be careful and have regular blood tests
- × If you take Digoxin for your heart, see your doctor first as it can cause an irregular heart beat

**What are the common side effects?**

- × Stomach cramps and pains
- × Constipation
- × Wind and bloating
- × It can affect the kidneys

**What drug interactions might there be?**

- × Separate from ALL medications by 2-3 hours as it can affect the absorption of them (Iron, Zinc)
- × It can interact with a range of medications, if taking long-term medication check with pharmacist before taking

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It is safe to use whilst pregnancy and is in all of the Pregnancy and Breastfeeding supplements to assist in the baby's healthy bone development as well as support the mothers need for calcium.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

It is safe to use.

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

It appears safe to use.

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ It is best to take Calcium with food and a large glass of water to prevent any side effects
- ✓ It is best absorbed at night time
- ✓ Separate it from all other medication by at least 2 hours as it is poorly absorbed.
- ✓ The carbonate form is the least absorbable form; choose the Citrate form if you are getting severe stomach side effects as it is absorbed well
- ✓ Only take supplements if you are unable to acquire it from food sources

**DOSAGE:**

Adults: 1000mg daily

Postmenopausal women and men > 70: 1300mg daily

**COMMON BRANDS:**

**SINGLE INGREDIENTS:**

**CALCIUM CARBONATE:**

- ✓ Caltrate 600mg
- ✓ Cal-Sup 500mg (chewable)
- ✓ CAL-600
- ✓ Cal Source 1000mg (dispersible tablets)

**CALCIUM CITRATE:**

- ✓ Citracal

**COMBINATION PRODUCTS:**

- ✓ Caltrate with Vitamin D
- ✓ Caltrate plus D and more
- ✓ Ostelin Vitamin D and Calcium
- ✓ Citracal plus D
- ✓ Cal Source

**13. CETIRAZINE**

### **What is it used for?**

This is a non-drowsy once a day anti-histamine used for symptoms caused by an allergic reaction; watery and itchy eyes, sneezing, runny nose, itchy throat, itchy skin and rash.

### **When should I be careful?**

- × Although preferred to the drowsy anti-histamines, care needs to be taken in the elderly population as they are more likely to suffer from the side effects listed.
- × If you have any disorders of the kidney, then your dose will need to be adjusted so consult your doctor first.

### **What are the common side effects?**

There are far fewer side effects than the older style sedating anti-histamines so are the preferred medication of choice if it works for you.

- × 5-10% of people can experience drowsiness more so than other non-drowsy antihistamines that exist
- × Headache
- × Nausea
- × Dry mouth

### **What drug interactions might there be?**

*There does not appear to be any known or significant interactions*

### **Can I use if I am pregnant?**

No, it is ADEC category B2 and is not considered safe to use.

### **Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

There is limited data; therefore shorter acting anti-histamines are preferred such as Fexofenadine 60mg which lasts only 12 hours.

### **Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

No it is advisable not to drink, as it can cause drowsiness and increase the effects of alcohol.

### **What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ This can produce mild drowsiness in 5-10% of the population; so you will need to see if this affects you before driving
- ✓ All people react differently to different anti-histamines, so it is a matter of trial and error to find the right one for you.
- ✓ People can get used to one type of anti-histamine when used for an extended period. Which means, if it is becoming less effective then stop taking it and try another non-drowsy anti-histamine and keep switching as needed.
- ✓ Follow the lifestyle advice given for allergies on page---
- ✓ If you are undergoing a skin-prick allergy test, then stop taking the anti-histamine at least 4 days before as it may affect the results.

### **DOSAGE:**

#### **ADULTS:**

10 mg (1 tablet) once daily for as long as necessary

#### **CHILDREN:**

Tablets: over 6: Half a tablet twice daily

Liquid: 1-2 years: 0.25mg/kg twice a day

2-6 years: 5mg once a day or 2.5mg twice a day

### **COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Zyrtec 10mg
- ✓ Zyrtec oral liquid 1mg/mL
- ✓ Zyrtec Oral drops 2.5mg/5 drops
- ✓ Alzene 10 tablets

## **14. CHLORAMPHENICOL**

### **What is it used for?**

It is an antibacterial that has only recently been made available over-the-counter to treat bacterial conjunctivitis of the eye.

### **When should I be careful?**

- × If should not be used if there are any known allergies to Chloramphenicol

- × It cannot be used if you have ANY blood disorders of ANY kind. You must tell the pharmacist if you have any underlying conditions as it could be very dangerous
- × If you have any disorders of the kidney as it can cause toxicity of chloramphenicol
- × If you have any disorders of the liver then the dose needs to be reduced so that toxicity does not occur
- × Pre-term babies and very small babies are at increased risk of side effects and should not be obtained OTC unless they are over 2 years old.

**What are the common side effects?**

Although it is used topically it can be absorbed into the blood and cause side effects especially in the at risk patients mentioned above.

- × Headache
- × Nausea and vomiting
- × Bone marrow suppression and more serious blood disorders
- × Diarrhoea

**What drug interactions might there be?**

- × It can interact with various medication so inform the pharmacist when obtaining it
- × To reduce interactions hold the tear ducts for 3 minutes after instilling the drops so less can get into the system

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It is ADEC category A and is considered safe to use for the shortest possible time.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

A single course of treatment may be used but watch signs of adverse effects in the baby. This can be minimised by holding tear ducts for 2 minutes after instilling the drops in to prevent its absorption into the blood.

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

It appears to be safe.

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ It is vital that you go to the doctor if you experience pale skin, sore throat, fever, tiredness or weakness.
- ✓ Contact lenses should not be used whilst using these eye drops and any contaminated lenses will need to be destroyed.
- ✓ If after 2 days of treatment there is no improvement or it is getting worse, then go to your doctor
- ✓ You must get rid of any contents left in the dropper bottle or tube of ointment 28 days after opening them as they are exposed to bacterial infection and re-use may infect your eyes.

**DOSAGE:**

**DROPS:**

Instil 1-2 drops into the affected eye every 3 to 6 hours for 2 days and then reduce to 1 drop four times a day for 5 days.

**OINTMENT:**

Apply a 1.5cm strip of ointment into the affected eye three times a day

**COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Chlorsig eye drops
- ✓ Chlorsig eye ointment

**15. CLOBETASONE**

**What is it used for?**

This is a topical corticosteroid that can be used for skin conditions to remove redness, itch, scales and inflammation. It can be used for eczema, dermatitis, bites and allergic skin reactions.

**When should I be careful?**

- × If you are diabetic then you should only use a small amount of cream for the shortest period of time (or better yet not at all) as it can be absorbed through the skin and increase blood glucose levels.
- × Do not use on broken or open skin or on ulcerating skin.
- × Do not use if there is any sign of infection, as steroids reduce the immune system and can cause infection to thrive.
- × Do not use for more than 1 week at a time as it can thin the skin; go to your doctor if needing it longer than this period

**What are the common side effects?**

- × Delayed wound healing

- × Depigmentation
- × Folliculitis
- × Acne flare ups
- × Thinning of the skin
- × Can get an allergic contact dermatitis if sensitive to steroids.

**What drug interactions might there be?**

- × Although used topically it can be absorbed through the nasal passages and thus possible to have drug interactions. If taking long-term medication check with pharmacist before using it.

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It is ADEC category A and may be used at the smallest amount and for the shortest duration of time.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

It may be used whilst breast feeding with smallest amount and for the shortest duration of time. avoid using it on or around the breast area though and apply it after the last feed.

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

It appears safe to use.

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ Use the smallest amount of cream as possible as it is strong and lasts a long time on the skin.
- ✓ This is a long acting cortisone; so only need to apply it once or twice a day as opposed to 3 to 4 times a day with Hydrocortisone.

**DOSAGE:**

Apply a thin smear to the affected area ONCE to TWICE a day for 5 to 7 days and then stop.

**COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Becoderm-C-flare-up
- ✓ Eumovate

**16. CLOTRIMAZOLE**

**What is it used for?**

This is a topical anti-fungal cream that is used to kill the fungus and stop more from growing.

**When should I be careful?**

×

**What are the common side effects?**

There are not a lot of side effects that have been reported through its use;

- × Burning and stinging to the skin
- × Possible redness due to allergic reactions

**What drug interactions might there be?**

- × Used topically this is unlikely to cause any interactions, however it is not impossible if large quantities are used. If taking any long-term medications check with the pharmacist before using it.

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

Yes, it is ADEC category A and is considered safe in all trimesters of pregnancy.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

It is considered safe to use at the recommended dose. However, remove any cream on or around the breast area before breast feeding is done.

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

It appears safe to use.

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ It does not appear to be more effective than the other anti-fungals it is just that using it only once a day means that compliance is higher which can ultimately cause greater success of treatment.

- ✓ It is vital with all anti-fungal treatments that you continue using for at least 2 weeks after symptoms disappear so that the fungus is completely treated.
- ✓ Follow all the skin fungal treatment advice on page ---

**DOSAGE:**

Apply to the affected area 2 to 3 times a day until symptoms resolve and for two weeks thereafter.

**COMMON BRANDS:**

Single ingredient:

- ✓ Canesten 1%
- ✓ Clonea 1%
- ✓ Clozole 1%

Combination products:

- ✓ Hydrozole

**17. COAL TAR**

**What is it used for?**

This is a topical preparation that is used to reduce itching, redness, thickened scales and act as a mild antibacterial for the skin. It is useful for eczema, dermatitis and psoriasis.

**When should I be careful?**

- × It should not be used on broken or inflamed skin
- × It can make the skin sensitive to the sun therefore making it red and more likely to burn
- × Care needs to be taken if you are taking other photosensitising medications as they effect can be cumulative.
- × It should not be used in children under 2 unless on doctor's advice
- × It can cause staining to the skin, hair and clothing.
- × There is conflicting evidence regarding whether or not tars cause cancer

**What are the common side effects?**

- × Stinging of the skin
- × Allergic reactions can occur
- × Photosensitivity
- × Folliculitis
- × Staining on the skin

**What drug interactions might there be?**

- × It is possible that it can cause more photosensitivity if taken with other photosensitising medications such as some antibiotics. If on long-term medication check with your pharmacist if can make your skin sensitive before using

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

There is limited data; however it is best to avoid use unless the benefits to the mother outweigh any possible risks.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

It may be used at the lowest possible dose for the shortest possible time however do not use on the nipple area.

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

It appears to be safe to use

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ Your doctor can write a prescription for a high coal tar containing cream that your pharmacist can prepare for you if the commercially available products do not work.
- ✓ have a break from treatment if redness or sensitivity occurs
- ✓ avoid any contact with the eyes as it can be very dangerous
- ✓ it is a good idea to avoid sunlight or UV radiation for 24 hours after application. If needed to have exposure then completely wash off the preparation from your skin

**DOSAGE:**

Cream or Gel: applied 2 to 4 times a day

Shampoo: used only TWICE per week

**COMMON BRANDS:**

Single ingredient:

- × Linotar gel 1%, 2%, 3%

- × Exorex psoriasis medication lotion 1 %
- × Neutrogena T/Gel Therapeutic shampoo 0.5%
- × Polytar liquid 1% Shampoo
- × Ionil T Plus 1% shampoo
- × Polytar Plus Liquid 4%

**Combination ingredient:**

- ✓ Eczema Cream (3%, dimethicone 2.5% and zinc oxide 10%)
- ✓ Psor-Assist (5%, salicylic acid 2% and sulphur 3%)
- ✓ Egosporyl-TA (5%, sulphur 0.5% and phenol)
- ✓ Neutrogena T/Gel Dual Action
- ✓ Sebitar (1%, salicylic acid 2% and pine tar 1 %)
- ✓ Ionil-T (5%, salicylic acid 2%)

**18. CODEINE**

**What is it used for?**

It is used to provide pain relief in acute and chronic pain. It is a type of medication in the 'Opioid' family.

**When should I be careful?**

- × If epileptic, care needs to be taken before using codeine as it may increase the risk of a seizure.
- × Codeine can cause respiratory depression, therefore in patients with lung disorders such as asthma, emphysema or similar; then care needs to be taken as breathing can be suppressed which is very dangerous.
- × If you have any disorders of the kidney or liver then you must visit your doctor as dose reductions and monitoring will need to be done.
- × The older the person gets the lower dose of codeine they should need and use. It can increase their risks of confusion, drowsiness and then falls
- × It can cause constipation and various side effects of the bowel and stomach. If you suffer from constipation then use codeine only for short term treatment and consider the use of Coloxyl and Senna for a few days whilst taking codeine.
- × It can interact with a lot of medication; so care needs to be taken
- × It can become habit forming, which is why such heavy regulations have been placed on the supply of codeine. It is only intended for ST use and if requiring ongoing treatment it is recommended to go to your doctor for a letter to explain use.
- × Rebound headaches with continued use

**What are the common side effects?**

- × Nausea, vomiting, upset stomach and constipation
- × Dizziness, especially on standing up
- × Drowsiness
- × Rebound headaches
- × Dry mouth
- × Itchy skin
- × Respiratory depression
- × confusion

**What drug interactions might there be?**

- × There are SEVERAL interactions so check with your pharmacist when obtaining any codeine products.

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

Although it is ADEC category A, it has been found to pass through the placenta. Therefore IF you need it; I would only recommend ONE dose per day and use Paracetamol the rest of the time.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

I would avoid it as it can pass through the milk supplies and lead to drowsiness of the baby. There have been reports of infant death. If you were to use it, then use it after the last feed and it will remain in the body for at least 6 hours.

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

No. Do not drink alcohol at ALL.

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ Take with food to minimise nausea and vomiting and take with plenty of water to prevent constipation

- ✓ You will be required to speak to the pharmacist in order to obtain these medications OTC. Depending on what state you are in; you may need to give your name and address (i.e. QLD) to have the product labelled which is a requirement by law.

**DOSAGE:**

It is only available in combination products with either Paracetamol or Ibuprofen.

**COMMON BRANDS:**

Paracetamol combination:

- ✓ Panadeine
- ✓ Panadeine Extra
- ✓ Mersyndol Day

Paracetamol + Doxylamine combination:

- ✓ Mersyndol night
- ✓ Dolased

Ibuprofen combination:

- ✓ Nurofen Plus
- ✓ Panafen Plus

**19. CROTAMITON**

**What is it used for?**

It is used to reduce itching caused by various reasons as well as provide treatment of scabies on the skin.

**When should I be careful?**

- × It is not to be used on inflamed, broken or weeping skin

**What are the common side effects?**

- × Irritation of the skin can occur
- × Allergic reactions can occur with this medication

**What drug interactions might there be?**

There does not appear to be any known or significant interactions

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It is ADEC category B2, so the use of Permethrin is the preferred treatment to use on pregnancy.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

Permethrin is still the medication of use in breast feeding also as it is unknown whether this can pass through the milk. If it is to be used; ensure that nothing is applied to the breast or nipple.

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

It appears safe to use

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ Avoid contact with the eyes and mouth and the inside of the nose
- ✓ It can be used for itch or to treat scabies
- ✓ It is not to be used in children under 2

**DOSAGE:**

Itch: apply to the affected area two to three times daily

Scabies: apply from the chin down once a day for 2 to 5 days and do not wash off for 24 hours.

**COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Eurax cream 10%
- ✓ Eurax Lotion 10%

**20. CYPROHEPTADINE**

**What is it used for?**

This is a sedating anti-histamine that can be used to reduce the symptoms of an allergic reaction; runny nose, sneezing, itchy and watery eyes, itchy skin. This particular one can also be used to treat symptoms of migraine; although it is unsure as to how effective it is.

**When should I be careful?**

- × If you have glaucoma, you must be careful and inform the pharmacist before taking as it can increase the pressure in the eye. Therefore not recommended.
- × If you have urinary incontinence symptoms, then these sedating anti-histamines can worsen this and it can cause urge and frequency of urination
- × The drowsiness they cause can increase the risk of falls
- × The elderly population are more susceptible to the side effects and should only use the smallest possible dose for the shortest time
- × Care should be taken in kidney and liver disease as the dose may need to be adjusted.

**What are the common side effects?**

- × Drowsiness that can last over to the next day
- × Dizziness
- × Ringing in the ears
- × Blurred vision
- × Incoordination
- × Anxiety
- × Tremor
- × *Nausea/vomiting (yet some antihistamines can help to prevent nausea and vomiting)*
- × Dry mouth
- × Cough
- × Urinary retention
- × Hallucinations
- × Can cause blood disorders (although rare)

**What drug interactions might there be?**

There are SEVERAL interactions so you must check with the pharmacist first before taking Cyproheptadine. Some examples include;

- × Anti-depressants
- × Codeine; can cause additive drowsiness
- × Other anti-histamines
- × Various other prescription medication

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It is ADEC category A, however as usual I only recommend it to be used ST and at the lowest possible dose.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

It is not recommended to use in breast feeding as it may lower the prolactin levels in the mother and dry up the breast milk.

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

NO WAY.

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ Like all antihistamines, some people respond well to one type and not another so it is a bit of trial and error that occurs.
- ✓ Used at bedtime ideally
- ✓ You should stop the antihistamines at least 4 days before a skin-prick allergy test as it may affect the results.
- ✓ Not to be used in children under 2 years; although it is only available in a tablet form so I cannot see the practicality of it being used in children that can't swallow tablets.

**DOSAGE:**

Adults: 4 mg (1 tablet) three times a day. Maximum of 8 tablets per day

Children:

2-6 years: half a tablet two to three times a day maximum of 3 tablets per day

7-14 years: 1 tablet three times a day maximum of 4 tablets per day

**COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Periactin 4mg

## 21. DESLORATIDINE

### What is it used for?

This is a non-drowsy once a day anti-histamine used for symptoms caused by an allergic reaction; watery and itchy eyes, sneezing, runny nose, itchy throat, itchy skin and rash.

### When should I be careful?

- × Although preferred to the drowsy anti-histamines, care needs to be taken in the elderly population as they are more likely to suffer from the side effects listed.
- × If you have any disorders of the kidney, then your dose will need to be adjusted so consult your doctor first.

### What are the common side effects?

There are far fewer side effects than the older style sedating anti-histamines so are the preferred medication of choice if it works for you.

- × Headache
- × Nausea
- × Dry mouth

### What drug interactions might there be?

*There does not appear to be any known or significant interactions*

### Can I use if I am pregnant?

It is ADEC category B1 and ideally should not be used, but may be considered suitable if a drowsy anti-histamine cannot be used.

### Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?

There is limited data; therefore shorter acting anti-histamines are preferred such as Fexofenadine 60mg which lasts only 12 hours.

### Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?

It appears safe to use.

### What other bits of information can you give me?

- ✓ All people react differently to different anti-histamines, so it is a matter of trial and error to find the right one for you.
- ✓ People can get used to one type of anti-histamine when used for an extended period. Which means, if it is becoming less effective then stop taking it and try another non-drowsy anti-histamine and keep switching as needed.
- ✓ Follow the lifestyle advice given for allergies on page---
- ✓ If you are undergoing a skin-prick allergy test, then stop taking the anti-histamine at least 4 days before as it may affect the results.

### DOSAGE:

#### ADULTS:

5mg (1 tablet) once a day

#### CHILDREN:

1-5 years: 1.25 mg (3mL) once daily

6-11 years: 2.5 mg (5 mL) once daily

### COMMON BRANDS:

- ✓ Aerius 5mg tablet
- ✓ Aerius 0.5mg/mL liquid

## 22. DEXCHLORPHENIRAMINE

### What is it used for?

This is a sedating anti-histamine that can be used to reduce the symptoms of an allergic reaction; runny nose, sneezing, itchy and watery eyes, itchy skin. This particular one can also be used to treat symptoms of migraine; although it is unsure as to how effective it is.

### When should I be careful?

- × If you have glaucoma, you must be careful and inform the pharmacist before taking as it can increase the pressure in the eye. Therefore not recommended.

- × If you have urinary incontinence symptoms, then these sedating anti-histamines can worsen this and it can cause urge and frequency of urination
- × The drowsiness they cause can increase the risk of falls
- × The elderly population are more susceptible to the side effects and should only use the smallest possible dose for the shortest time
- × Care should be taken in kidney and liver disease as the dose may need to be adjusted.

**What are the common side effects?**

- × Drowsiness that can last over to the next day
- × Dizziness
- × Ringing in the ears
- × Blurred vision
- × Incoordination
- × Anxiety
- × Tremor
- × *Nausea/vomiting (yet some antihistamines can help to prevent nausea and vomiting)*
- × Dry mouth
- × Cough
- × Urinary retention
- × Hallucinations
- × Can cause blood disorders (although rare)

**What drug interactions might there be?**

There are SEVERAL interactions so you must check with the pharmacist first before taking Dexchlorpheniramine. Some examples include;

- × Anti-depressants
- × Codeine; can cause additive drowsiness
- × Other anti-histamines
- × Various other prescription medication

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It is ADEC category A, however as usual I only recommend it to be used ST and at the lowest possible dose. I would recommend not using it in the last trimester so that it does not cause respiratory depression in your child.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

It may be used in breastfeeding only for short term and after the last feed. If any drowsiness or adverse effects occur in the baby, stop immediately.

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

NO WAY

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ Like all antihistamines, some people respond well to one type and not another so it is a bit of trial and error that occurs.
- ✓ Used at bedtime ideally
- ✓ You should stop the antihistamines at least 4 days before a skin-prick allergy test as it may affect the results.
- ✓ Not to be used in children under 2 years; although it is only available in a tablet form so I cannot see the practicality of it being used in children that can't swallow tablets.

**DOSAGE:**

Adults: 1 tablet every 6 hours

Children: only over 2-6 for allergies: 0.04mg/kg/dose every 6 to 8 hours

Children: for colds, allergies and sleep: 1 tablet every 6 to 8 hours only when requires.

**COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Polaramine 2mg
- ✓ Polaramine Syrup 0.4mg/mL

**23. DEXTROMETHORPHAN**

**What is it used for?**

This is a codeine type of cough suppressant for a dry and tickly non-productive cough.

### **When should I be careful?**

- × If you suffer from asthma or any lung disorder you should not use a cough suppressant as it can mask the symptoms of worsening asthma symptoms and possibly make breathing harder.
- × If you have any liver disorders then you should be careful as a lower dose may be required
- × Elderly people are more likely to suffer from side effects, so they need to be monitored and possibly given the lowest dose for the shortest time
- × Cough suppressants are not to be used in children under 6 any longer
- × If you take anti-depressants you must check with the pharmacist first. Taking certain anti-depressants with this ingredient can cause a disorder called SERATONIN SYNDROME; which can cause chills, tremor, sweating and increased blood pressure.
- × Cough suppressants can cause drowsiness so care needs to be taken before driving

### **What are the common side effects?**

- × Drowsiness
- × Constipation
- × Nausea and vomiting
- × Respiratory depression in those with underlying lung condition

### **What drug interactions might there be?**

There are SEVERAL interactions so you must check with the pharmacist first before taking Dextromethorphan. Some examples include;

- × Anti-depressants
- × Codeine; can cause additive drowsiness
- × Drowsy anti-histamines
- × Various other prescription medication

### **Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It is ADEC category A when used at the recommended dose for the shortest possible time.

### **Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

It may be used at the recommended dose and used after the last feed but since it lasts for 4 to 6 hours, monitor the baby for any side effects and stop immediately.

### **Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

No you should not at all. It increases the effects of alcohol and cause exceptional drowsiness and possible impair your breathing.

### **What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ Any cough suppressants should only be used for 48 hours; as any cough that lasts longer than this should be reviewed by your doctor
- ✓ If there is any tightness in the chest or wheezing then you must go to your doctor for an inhaler or something stronger from your doctor.
- ✓ It is a good idea to sip the mixture slowly as it will coat the throat and keep it lubricated and moist.
- ✓ It should be given 15-20 minutes before bed to assist with a cough through the night

### **DOSAGE:**

#### **ADULT:**

10-20mg every 4 hours or 30mg every 6 to 8 hours

#### **CHILDREN > 6 YEARS:**

5-10mg every 4 hours or 15mg every 6 to 8 hours

### **COMMON BRANDS:**

#### **Single ingredient:**

- ✓ Bisolvon Dry
- ✓ Benadryl Dry forte
- ✓ Robitussin DX dry cough forte
- ✓ Tussinol for Dry Coughs

#### **Combination products:**

- ✓ Codral Cold and Flu and Cough

## 24. DICLOFENAC

### What is it used for?

This is an NSAID that removes pain, fever and inflammation that can be used topically or in tablet form.

### When should I be careful?

- × Allergies to any anti-inflammatories including aspirin
- × Asthma sufferers may have their symptoms worsened if they are sensitive to anti-inflammatories
- × Stomach ulcers and burning symptoms in the stomach can be made worse with Diclofenac, as it removes a protective chemical that normally is in the stomach lining.
- × It can cause fluid retention, therefore be careful if you have a heart or kidney disorder. It can make sufferers of heart failure and high blood pressure much worse as well as increase fluid retention. All NSAIDS can increase the risk of heart effects occurring; increasing blood pressure and reducing kidney function
- × Care needs to be taken if you have any liver disorders as you may need a much lower dose.
- × Elderly people are more likely to suffer from the side effects so care needs to be taken
- × Do not use if there is any sign of bleeding or excessive bruising as it can make it worse
- × If undergoing surgery, check with the surgeon when to stop taking it. Ideally should be at least 2-3 days prior to surgery, but there is a risk of increasing risk of stroke/heart attack.
- × This is not to be used in children under 12 as it can cause Reye's Syndrome
- × Should not be used in children aged 12-16 with chicken pox, influenza or a fever either.

### What are the common side effects?

- × Nausea, heartburn/indigestion, vomiting can occur
- × Stomach ulceration can occur
- × Dizziness
- × Headache
- × Raised liver enzymes
- × Salt and fluid retention
- × Increased blood pressure
- × Can cause rash/itching in some people
- × Although infrequent; confusion, blood disorders, photosensitivity, blurred vision or tinnitus can occur
- × Allergy reactions can occur; runny nose, wheezing, tightness of the chest, worsening asthma and rash if sensitive.

### What drug interactions might there be?

There are SEVERAL interactions so you must check with the pharmacist first before taking Diclofenac. Some examples include;

- × The use of other anti-inflammatories both oral or topical
- × Blood pressure medication
- × Diuretics
- × Blood thinning medication
- × Various other prescription medication

### Can I use if I am pregnant?

It is ADEC category C, and is not recommended in pregnancy especially in the Third trimester. It can increase the risk of miscarriage and bleeding; however 100mg dosing may be considered safe on doctor's instructions only.

### Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?

It should be used after a feed at the lowest dose for the shortest time and monitor your child for any side effects or changes, however it can be sued.

### Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?

No, you should not have alcohol with Diclofenac. It can affect the liver and kidneys and increase the burning in the stomach and possibly cause an ulcer.

### What other bits of information can you give me?

- ✓ You must take Diclofenac with food without exception,
- ✓ Stop if any signs of allergy occur
- ✓ Like all anti-inflammatories, some people respond well to one type and not another. It is trial and error to find the right one that suits you.
- ✓ You must stop taking it immediately if you have fluid retention, bleeding in the stools or are vomiting

### DOSAGE:

**ADULTS:**

Take 2 tablets immediately (25mg or 50mg) and then 1 tablet every eight hours with food. Maximum of 8 tablets per day

Gel: apply to the affected area three to four times a day

**COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Voltaren Rapid 12.5mg
- ✓ Voltaren Rapid 25mg
- ✓ Voltaren Emugel

**25. DIHYDROCODEINE**

**What is it used for?**

This is a codeine type of cough suppressant for a dry and tickly non-productive cough. It is the most likely to cause drowsiness of the cough suppressants available over-the-counter and usually reserved for stubborn dry coughs in consultation with the pharmacist.

**When should I be careful?**

- × If you suffer from asthma or any lung disorder you should not use a cough suppressant as it can mask the symptoms of worsening asthma symptoms and possibly make breathing harder.
- × If you have any liver disorders then you should be careful as a lower dose may be required
- × Elderly people are more likely to suffer from side effects, so they need to be monitored and possibly given the lowest dose for the shortest time
- × Cough suppressants are not to be used in children under 6 any longer
- × If you take anti-depressants you must check with the pharmacist first. Taking certain anti-depressants with this ingredient can cause a disorder called SERATONIN SYNDROME; which can cause chills, tremor, sweating and increased blood pressure.
- × Cough suppressants can cause drowsiness so care needs to be taken before driving

**What are the common side effects?**

- × Drowsiness
- × Constipation
- × Nausea and vomiting
- × Respiratory depression in those with underlying lung condition

**What drug interactions might there be?**

- × There are SEVERAL interactions so check with your pharmacist when obtaining any codeine-based products.

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It is ADEC category A when used at the recommended dose for the shortest possible time.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

It may be used at the recommended dose and used after the last feed but since it lasts for 4 to 6 hours, monitor the baby for any side effects and stop immediately.

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

No you should not at all. It increases the effects of alcohol and cause exceptional drowsiness and possible impair your breathing.

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ Any cough suppressants should only be used for 48 hours; as any cough that lasts longer than this should be reviewed by your doctor
- ✓ If there is any tightness in the chest or wheezing then you must go to your doctor for an inhaler or something stronger from your doctor.
- ✓ It is a good idea to sip the mixture slowly as it will coat the throat and keep it lubricated and moist.
- ✓ It should be given 15-20 minutes before bed to assist with a cough through the night

**DOSAGE:**

**ADULTS:**

Take 5-10mL every 4 to 6 hours. It will cause drowsiness so only use at bed time if you need to be awake through the day.

**CHILD > 6 YEARS:**

2.5-5 mL every 4 to 6 hours.

### **COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Rikodeine

## **26. DIPHENHYDRAMINE**

### **What is it used for?**

This is a sedating anti-histamine that can be used to reduce the symptoms of an allergic reaction; runny nose, sneezing, itchy and watery eyes, itchy skin. This particular one can also be used to treat symptoms of migraine; although it is unsure as to how effective it is.

### **When should I be careful?**

- × If you have glaucoma, you must be careful and inform the pharmacist before taking as it can increase the pressure in the eye. Therefore not recommended.
- × If you have urinary incontinence symptoms, then these sedating anti-histamines can worsen this and it can cause urge and frequency of urination
- × The drowsiness they cause can increase the risk of falls
- × The elderly population are more susceptible to the side effects and should only use the smallest possible dose for the shortest time
- × Care should be taken in kidney and liver disease as the dose may need to be adjusted.

### **What are the common side effects?**

- × The drowsiness can carry over to the next day
- × It can be habit forming meaning that you may have trouble sleeping without it
- × Drowsiness that can last over to the next day
- × Dizziness
- × Ringing in the ears
- × Blurred vision
- × Incoordination
- × Anxiety
- × Tremor
- × *Nausea/vomiting (yet some antihistamines can help to prevent nausea and vomiting)*
- × Dry mouth
- × Cough
- × Urinary retention
- × Hallucinations
- × Can cause blood disorders (although rare)

### **What drug interactions might there be?**

There are SEVERAL interactions so you must check with the pharmacist first before taking Diphenhydramine. Some examples include;

- × Anti-depressants
- × Codeine; can cause additive drowsiness
- × Other anti-histamines
- × Various other prescription medication

### **Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It is ADEC category A, however as usual I only recommend it to be used ST and at the lowest possible dose. I would recommend not using it in the last trimester so that it does not cause respiratory depression in your child.

### **Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

It may be used in breastfeeding only for short term and after the last feed. If any drowsiness or adverse effects occur in the baby, stop immediately.

### **Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

NO WAY

### **What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ Like all antihistamines, some people respond well to one type and not another so it is a bit of trial and error that occurs.
- ✓ Used at bedtime ideally
- ✓ You should stop the antihistamines at least 4 days before a skin-prick allergy test as it may affect the results.

- ✓ Not to be used in children under 2 years; although it is only available in a tablet form so I cannot see the practicality of it being used in children that can't swallow tablets.
- ✓ It is habit forming so should only be used for say 3 days in a week and then stop

**DOSAGE:**

Adults only: 50mg 30 minutes before bed

**COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Unisom sleep gels 50mg
- ✓ Snuzaid tablets 50mg
- ✓ Snuzaid capsules 50mg

**27. DIPHENOXYLATE**

**What is it used for?**

This is a codeine based ingredient that is used for diarrhoea. It is the most likely to cause drowsiness of all the two ingredients used to treat diarrhoea over-the-counter.

**When should I be careful?**

- × It must not be used in any obstruction or inflammation of the bowel.
- × It must not be used in severe liver disease
- × It is not to be used in children under 12.
- × It has less ability to be addictive than codeine; however it is still only recommended for short term use.
- × If epileptic, care needs to be taken before using codeine as it may increase the risk of a seizure.
- × Codeine can cause respiratory depression, therefore in patients with lung disorders such as asthma, emphysema or similar; then care needs to be taken as breathing can be suppressed which is very dangerous.
- × If you have any disorders of the kidney or liver then you must visit your doctor as dose reductions and monitoring will need to be done.
- × The older the person gets the lower dose of codeine they should need and use. It can increase their risks of confusion, drowsiness and then falls
- × It can interact with a lot of medication; so care needs to be taken

**What are the common side effects?**

- × Nausea, vomiting, upset stomach, bloating
- × Constipation can occur if you take too much
- × Dizziness, especially on standing up
- × Drowsiness
- × Rebound headaches
- × Dry mouth
- × Itchy skin and/or rash
- × Respiratory depression
- × confusion

**What drug interactions might there be?**

There are SEVERAL possible interactions as with all codeine-based products so check with the pharmacist first before taking

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

No, it is ADEC category C and is not recommended to use.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

Although it may be safe in one dose, it can pass through the milk supplies and lead to drowsiness of the baby. There have been reports of infant death. If you were to use it, then use it after the last feed and it will remain in the body for at least 6 hours.

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

No. Do not drink alcohol at ALL. Not only will it make you drowsy and increase the effects of alcohol, alcohol can dehydrate you and if you have diarrhoea you can become dehydrated.

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ Take with food to minimise nausea and vomiting and take with plenty of water to prevent constipation
- ✓ You will be required to speak to the pharmacist in order to obtain these medications OTC. Depending on what state you are in; you may need to give your name and address (i.e. QLD) to have the product labelled which is a requirement by law.

- ✓ Can only get and 8 pack over-the-counter; larger 20 packets are available on prescription from your doctor.

**DOSAGE:**

Adults only: take 2 tablets (5mg) three to four times a day. Maximum of 8 tablets per day

**COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Lomotil

**28. DOCUSATE**

**What is it used for?**

This is stool softener that is used to draw water into the stools to treat constipation. It helps to prevent straining and may be used alone or in combination with Senna.

**When should I be careful?**

- x You will need to drink plenty of water to help make the medication work well

**What are the common side effects?**

- x Stomach cramps
- x Diarrhoea if you take too much
- x Nausea
- x Rash

**What drug interactions might there be?**

*There does not appear to be any known or significant interactions*

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It is ADEC category A and is considered safe to use in the three trimesters.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

It is safe to use at the lowest dose for the shortest time and after the last feed. Monitor the signs in the baby.

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

Alcohol causes dehydration and so may cause Docusate to not work as well as it requires water to soften the stools. I would recommend avoiding it.

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ It can take 1-3 days to work providing you drink water
- ✓ If it does not work on its own you can add Senna to it for a short period of time which helps to push the stools out.

**DOSAGE:**

**ADULTS:**

Single ingredient:

100-150mg once or twice a day, to a maximum of 480mg per day.

Enema can be used: 5 mL rectally and should work within 5 to 20 minutes

**Combination product:**

1-2 tablets at bedtime up to a maximum of 4 tablets.

**CHILDREN:**

Single ingredient:

**3-6 years:** 50mg once daily

**6-12 years:** 50-120mg daily

**Combination product:**

**6-12 years:** 1-2 tablets at bedtime

**COMMON BRANDS:**

Single ingredient:

- ✓ Coloxyl 50mg (brown)
- ✓ Coloxyl 120mg (green)
- ✓ Enamax 50mg/mL enema

Combination product:

- ✓ Coloxyl and Senna 50mg and senna 8mg
- ✓ Sennesoft 50mg and senna 8mg
- ✓ Soflax 50mg and senna 8mg

**29. DOXYLAMINE**

**What is it used for?**

This is a sedating anti-histamine that can be used to reduce the symptoms of an allergic reaction; runny nose, sneezing, itchy and watery eyes, itchy skin. This particular one can also be used to treat symptoms of migraine; although it is unsure as to how effective it is.

**When should I be careful?**

- × If you have glaucoma, you must be careful and inform the pharmacist before taking as it can increase the pressure in the eye. Therefore not recommended.
- × If you have urinary incontinence symptoms, then these sedating anti-histamines can worsen this and it can cause urge and frequency of urination
- × The drowsiness they cause can increase the risk of falls
- × The elderly population are more susceptible to the side effects and should only use the smallest possible dose for the shortest time
- × Care should be taken in kidney and liver disease as the dose may need to be adjusted.

**What are the common side effects?**

- × Drowsiness that can last over to the next day
- × Dizziness
- × Ringing in the ears
- × Blurred vision
- × Incoordination
- × Anxiety
- × Tremor
- × *Nausea/vomiting (yet some antihistamines can help to prevent nausea and vomiting)*
- × Dry mouth
- × Cough
- × Urinary retention
- × Hallucinations
- × Can cause blood disorders (although rare)

**What drug interactions might there be?**

There are SEVERAL interactions so you must check with the pharmacist first before taking Doxylamine. Some examples include;

- × Anti-depressants
- × Codeine; can cause additive drowsiness
- × Other anti-histamines
- × Various other prescription medication

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It is ADEC category A, however as usual I only recommend it to be used ST and at the lowest possible dose. I would recommend not using it in the last trimester so that it does not cause respiratory depression in your child.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

It may be used in breastfeeding only for short term and after the last feed. If any drowsiness or adverse effects occur in the baby, stop immediately.

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

NO WAY

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ Like all antihistamines, some people respond well to one type and not another so it is a bit of trial and error that occurs.
- ✓ Used at bedtime ideally
- ✓ You should stop the antihistamines at least 4 days before a skin-prick allergy test as it may affect the results.
- ✓ Not to be used in children under 2 years; although it is only available in a tablet form so I cannot see the practicality of it being used in children that can't swallow tablets.

**DOSAGE:**

Adults only: 25-20mg 30 minutes before bed only when required for sleep

If you have not used it before or are small in size, use only one quarter of a tablet and increase to half if not enough.

**COMMON BRANDS:****Single ingredients:**

- ✓ Restavit 25mg
- ✓ Dozile 25mg tablets
- ✓ Dozile 25mg capsules

**Combination products with Paracetamol + Codeine:**

- ✓ Mersyndol Night
- ✓ Dolased

**Combination products in Cold and Flu tablets:****30. ECONAZOLE****What is it used for?**

This is a topical anti-fungal cream that is used to kill the fungus and stop more from growing.

**When should I be careful?**

x

**What are the common side effects?**

There are not a lot of side effects that have been reported through its use;

- x Burning and stinging to the skin
- x Possible redness due to allergic reactions

**What drug interactions might there be?**

- x Used topically this is unlikely to cause any interactions, however it is not impossible if large quantities are used. If taking any long-term medications check with the pharmacist before using it.

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

Yes, it is ADEC category A and is considered safe in all trimesters of pregnancy.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

It is considered safe to use at the recommended dose. However, remove any cream on or around the breast area before breast feeding is done.

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

It appears safe to use.

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ It does not appear to be more effective than the other anti-fungals it is just that using it only once a day means that compliance is higher which can ultimately cause greater success of treatment.
- ✓ It is vital with all anti-fungal treatments that you continue using for at least 2 weeks after symptoms disappear so that the fungus is completely treated.
- ✓ Follow all the skin fungal treatment advice on page ---

**DOSAGE:****Cream:**

Apply to the affected area 2 to 3 times a day

**Foaming Solution:**

Wet the body in the shower and then apply the solution on the body and leave it on for 24 hours before washing it off. Repeat for 3 consecutive days and then again 1 month and in 3 months after the first dose.

**COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Pevaryl cream 1%
- ✓ Pevaryl Foaming Solution 1%

### **31. FAMCICLOVIR**

#### **What is it used for?**

This is an anti-viral medication that is available to treat the cold sores at the onset of their arrival.

#### **When should I be careful?**

- × If you have any disorders of the kidney then the dose may need to be adjusted
- × This medication may make you feel dizzy, so you must be careful if you are driving
- × It can only be given according to the PSA guidelines

#### **What are the common side effects?**

- × Headache
- × Vomiting
- × Dizziness
- × Confusion in the elderly
- × Rarely: hallucination and rash

#### **What drug interactions might there be?**

*There does not appear to be any known or significant interactions*

#### **Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It is ADEC category B1 and should only be used on doctor's advice.

#### **Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

It should only be used if the benefits outweigh the risks to the baby. There are better options on prescription.

#### **Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

#### **What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ It is a good idea to carry a course of tablets with you if you suffer from them a lot so that you can take them at the first onset of symptoms
- ✓ Only available OTC for the treatment of cold sores. If you have any other viral infection then you should go to the doctor.

#### **DOSAGE:**

Take 3 tablets as a single dose immediately at the first sign of cold sores.

#### **COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Famvir 500mg 3 tablets

### **32. FEXOFENADINE**

#### **What is it used for?**

This is a non-drowsy once a day anti-histamine used for symptoms caused by an allergic reaction; watery and itchy eyes, sneezing, runny nose, itchy throat, itchy skin and rash.

#### **When should I be careful?**

- × Although preferred to the drowsy anti-histamines, care needs to be taken in the elderly population as they are more likely to suffer from the side effects listed.
- × If you have any disorders of the kidney, then your dose will need to be adjusted so consult your doctor first.

#### **What are the common side effects?**

There are far fewer side effects than the older style sedating anti-histamines so are the preferred medication of choice if it works for you.

- × Headache
- × Nausea
- × Dry mouth

#### **What drug interactions might there be?**

- × It can interact with Iron supplements so it is best to separate taking them by 2 hours

#### **Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It is ADEC category B2 and is not recommended to use in pregnancy. Loratidine has the most experience in being used in pregnancy; but risk is still there.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

There is limited data; and recommended not to use. However Fexofenadine 60mg lasts only 12 hours and is the shortest acting anti-histamine that is on the market. Steroid nasal sprays would still be the medication of choice as it is topical.

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

It appears safe to use.

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ All people react differently to different anti-histamines, so it is a matter of trial and error to find the right one for you.
- ✓ People can get used to one type of anti-histamine when used for an extended period. Which means, if it is becoming less effective then stop taking it and try another non-drowsy anti-histamine and keep switching as needed.
- ✓ Follow the lifestyle advice given for allergies on page----
- ✓ If you are undergoing a skin-prick allergy test, then stop taking the anti-histamine at least 4 days before as it may affect the results.

**DOSAGE:**

**ADULTS:**

60mg twice a day or  
120mg once a day or  
180mg once a day (for hives and skin reactions)

**CHILDREN:**

30mg twice a day

**COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Telfast 30mg, 60mg, 120mg and 180mg
- ✓ Xergic 60mg, 120mg or 180mg
- ✓ Fexotabs 30mg, 60mg, 120mg or 180mg

**33. FLUCONAZOLE**

**What is it used for?**

This is an anti-fungal ingredient that is available over-the-counter as a single dose to treat symptoms of thrush.

**When should I be careful?**

- × If you have any allergies to anti-fungal medications
- × If you have any liver disorders you should not use it as it can be very taxing on the liver
- × If can only be used in people over 18
- × If you have any kidney disorders then you should avoid taking this
- × It interacts with a lot of medication; including the contraceptive pill so be sure to tell the pharmacist when you get it
- × If you have any heart conditions you need to be careful; Fluconazole can increase the risk of arrhythmias
- × Care needs to be taken in people with epilepsy as it may increase the risk of seizures.

**What are the common side effects?**

- × Some people can get tired
- × Some people can get dizzy
- × Arrhythmia's can occur

**What drug interactions might there be?**

- × There are SEVERAL interactions with this medication and although only a single dose it can still cause huge complications. You must tell your pharmacist all medications you take when getting this tablets. Some examples;
- × Anti-depressants
- × *Contraceptive pill*
- × Ibuprofen
- × Various other prescription medication

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It is ADEC category D, so it is not recommended.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

Fluconazole is secreted into the breast milk and I would recommend not using it unless on doctor's advice.

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

No. it is very taxing on the liver and you do not want to put more pressure on the liver.

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ It can take up to 3 days to work completely, so do not be alarmed if it does not work straight away. If you do want a quick symptomatic relief then use the creams first. Or use the cream whilst the tablet is working
- ✓ Follow the thrush treatment recommendations discussed on page –
- ✓ Consider the use of probiotics whilst taking Fluconazole but 2 hours apart
- ✓ Go to your doctor if you are usually tired or nauseous or pale or have lost your appetite. Or if you have dark stools.

**DOSAGE:**

Take 1 150mg tablet as a single dose with a full glass of water.

**COMMON BRANDS:**

**Single ingredient:**

- ✓ Diflucan One
- ✓ Canesoral
- ✓ Trust Femzole

**Combination product:**

- ✓ Diflucan plus cream
- ✓ Canesoral plus cream
- ✓ Trust Femzole plus cream

**34. FLUTICASONE**

**What is it used for?**

This is a corticosteroid that is used topically in the nose as an anti-inflammatory, dry up mucus, reduce congestion and stop sneezing and itching symptoms caused by allergies.

**When should I be careful?**

- × All corticosteroids should be avoided if there is an infection, as it reduces the immune system and makes the infection worse
- × It should not be used if the sinus passages are bleeding as it can thin the passage and make bleeding worse (also bleeding may indicate an underlying infection and this is not to be used)
- × It should not be used if you have had recent nose surgery or trauma as corticosteroids can delay healing; unless advised by your doctor.

**What are the common side effects?**

- × Nasal stinging
- × Possible itching
- × Dry mouth, sore throat or bitter taste as it enters the mouth from nasal passages
- × Can cause nose bleeds
- × Allergic reactions are possible
- × Glaucoma and cataracts can occur if being used long term or excessively

**What drug interactions might there be?**

- × Although used topically it can be absorbed through the nasal passages and thus possible to have drug interactions. If taking long-term medication check with pharmacist before using it.

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It is ADEC category B3 but is considered safe to use in pregnancy for a short period of time and at the lowest dose to control symptoms. However, I would recommend the use of Budesonide which is ADEC category A and much safer to use.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

It is considered safe to use in breastfeeding. As usual, I would recommend dosing straight after a feed and monitoring baby for any changes.

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

It appears safe to use.

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ It seems to have the same effectiveness as other nasal steroids.
- ✓ It tends to work within 3 to 7 hours but the best effects are seen from using it for several days.

**DOSAGE:**

Adults: initially 2 sprays once a day and then reduce to 1 spray daily

**COMMON BRANDS:**

- × Beconase/Flixonase Allergy and hay fever 24 hour 60 doses

**35. FOLIC ACID**

**What is it used for?**

This is a natural supplement that is necessary for many functions of all cells in the body and is most commonly used to prevent neural tube defects in unborn children during pregnancy. It is also used to prevent side effects of Methotrexate and used in some type of anaemia's.

**When should I be careful?**

- × If you are unsure about what type of anaemia you have then you should confirm with your doctor if you need to take it as it is not to be used in all types of anaemia.
- × If you are taking certain medications then you will need a higher dosage of folic acid as they can reduce how much of folic acid is in the blood stream i.e. epileptic medication, certain antibiotics and others.
- × If you have certain medical conditions it can reduce how much of it is absorbed i.e. malabsorption conditions, kidney disorders.

**What are the common side effects?**

These are rare:

- × Rash
- × Wheezing
- × Nausea
- × Diarrhoea
- × Sleep disturbance
- × Irritability

**What drug interactions might there be?**

- × There are several possible interactions with prescription medication, so check with the pharmacist if taking long term medication

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

Absolutely! In fact it is recommended to begin at least 1 month if not 3 months prior to trying to have a baby to prevent the chance of neural tube defects occurring. It is found in all of the pregnancy formulations

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

Yes!

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

It appears to be safe; however if you are using it as pre-conception or if you are pregnant then you should be avoiding alcohol anyhow to minimise any harm or risk to your unborn baby.

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ Take it at least 1 month prior to conceiving
- ✓ Certain foods to contain high amounts of folic acid: green leafy vegetables, nuts and legumes

**DOSAGE:**

\*If you have no other complications or risk factors: it is recommended that you have 400 micrograms once a day

\*If you have had pregnancy complications in the past or have risk factors: take 5mg daily

**COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Megafol 0.5mg
- ✓ Megafol 5mg
- ✓ Blackmore's Folate
- ✓ Nature's Own Folate
- ✓ Swisse

## 36. GLUCAGON

### What is it used for?

This is an injection that is needed to increase blood glucose levels in diabetics that have hypoglycaemia.

### When should I be careful?

- × If your body is in starvation mode then it will not work as it needs to break down glucose stores
- × All family and friends will need to be trained to use the GlugaGen Hypokit if needed in an emergency

### What are the common side effects?

- × Nausea
- × Vomiting
- × Allergic reactions may occur

### What drug interactions might there be?

There appears to be no known or significant interactions

### Can I use if I am pregnant?

Yes

### Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?

Yes

### Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?

No. You will need this injection when you have low blood sugars and alcohol would make everything worse!

### What other bits of information can you give me?

- ✓ A person should respond to Glucagon within 10-15 minutes but you should call an ambulance anyhow in case it does not work and to assess the patient
- ✓ You need to give the patient a long acting carbohydrate once they are awake to give them long acting energy stores

### DOSAGE:

Give one injection when needed.

Children <5 years: half an injection

### How do you use this injection?

### COMMON BRANDS:

- ✓ Glucagon Hypokit

## 37. GLYCEROL

### What is it used for?

This is classified as an 'osmotic laxative' that draws water into the stools to treat constipation.

### When should I be careful?

- × When you do not have enough water in your system

### What are the common side effects?

- × Rectal discomfort (suppository)
- ×

### What drug interactions might there be?

*There appears to be no known or significant interactions*

### Can I use if I am pregnant?

It is ADEC category A and is safe to use.

### Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?

It is safe to use whilst breast feeding.

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

It is advisable not to as it will cause dehydration and cause the glycerol to not work.

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ Drink plenty of water for this to work well
- ✓ Ensure that it is not too hot when handling it as it can easily melt

**DOSAGE:**

ADULT: 1 once daily when required 2.8G

CHILD >1 year: Use Glycerol Child suppositories 1.4G 1 when required

CHILD 1 month-1 YEAR: Use Glycerol Infant suppositories 700mg 1 when required

**COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Glycerol suppositories infant, child and adults

**38. GLYCERYL TRINITRATE**

**What is it used for?**

This is used to increase blood flow to the heart when you are having an angina attack (heart disorder).

**When should I be careful?**

- × It should not be used if you are not having an angina attack or if you have not been diagnosed as having angina
- × You need to be well hydrated for this medication to work well.
- × You must never ever use this medication whilst taking prescription medication for erectile dysfunction: Viagra, Cialis or Levitra.
- × If you have anaemia then you need to have it treated as GTN can cause complications if you have anaemia.
- × If you have low blood pressure you must be very careful as it can make you faint
- × If you need to use it more often then you must see your doctor.

**What are the common side effects?**

- × Headache
- × Flushing of the face
- × Dizziness
- × Palpitations
- × Oedema in the legs

**What drug interactions might there be?**

- × It is not to be used if taking prescription medication for erectile dysfunction; Viagra, Cialis or Levitra. There needs to be a gap of -----hours. If you require both medications talk to your pharmacist or doctor about how to manage both conditions safely
- × This can interact with all medications that reduce blood pressure so speak to your pharmacist if taking BP medications

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It is ADEC category B2 but you should be undergoing monitoring from your doctor who can give you the best advice that is appropriate and specific to you.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

You should be undergoing monitoring from your doctor who can give you the best advice that is appropriate and specific to you.

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ Care needs to be taken when standing up quickly as you may get dizzy
- ✓ It is best to use the spray when sitting down
- ✓ If you are not getting any relief after 5 minutes do it again then call the ambulance as you only have 10 minutes for it to work
- ✓ Available in a sublingual tablet or spray; depending on what you prefer
- ✓ The spray can last 2 years on opening

- ✓ The tablets are less stable so only last for 3 months after opening. They must be kept in the original container with the cotton ball still in it and do not keep too close to your body as the heat can affect the product
- ✓ Must be stored away from sunlight and moisture

**DOSAGE:**

**Sublingual tablets:**

Place half to one under the tongue and allow it to dissolve slowly. Once it has worked you can spit out the tablet

**Spray:**

Prime the spray by pressing the nozzle 5 times in the air (first time or after 4 months). If you have not used it in 7 days then prime it by spraying 1 spray.

**COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Anginine 600mcg glyceryl trinitate
- ✓ Lycinate 600mcg glyceryl trinitate
- ✓ Nitrolingual spray

**39. GUAIPHENASIN**

**What is it used for?**

This is an expectorant ingredient used to help bring up mucus that is on the chest.

**When should I be careful?**

- × If the mucus is coloured or if there is any sign of blood go to your doctor
- × If there is tightness in the chest or wheezing then go to the doctor
- × If there is any fever then it could be a sign of infection

**What are the common side effects?**

There are none that have been reported.

**What drug interactions might there be?**

There appears to be no known or significant interactions

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It is ADEC category A and may be used.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

There is insufficient data; however it appears to be safe to use. Monitor the baby for any changes in behaviour.

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

It appears to be safe to use, but being well hydrated helps to thin out the mucus on the chest plus it allows your body to recover more effectively.

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ Drink lots of water to help thin out the mucus and make it easier to use
- ✓ You can take Paracetamol with Guaifenesin if you have a fever or pain
- ✓ Only to be used in children over 6 years of age

**DOSAGE:**

This is not used on its own, only in combination with Bromhexine.

**COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Benadryl Chesty Forte
- ✓ Duro-Tuss Chesty Forte

**40. HEXAMINE HIPPURATE**

**What is it used for?**

This is an antibacterial medication that is used to prevent and treat bacterial urinary tract infections.

**When should I be careful?**

- × If it is a severe infection then you should see your doctor for something stronger
- × It should not be used if you are suffering from dehydration

- × It should not be used if you suffer from gout as it can cause urate crystals to form in the urine
- × Care need to be taken if you have kidney disorders
- × It is not to be used in liver disorders at all
- × You should not be taken whilst taking Ural, Citravescent or Citralite as it reduces the effects of Hiprex.

**What are the common side effects?**

- × Nausea
- × Vomiting
- × Diarrhoea
- × Rash

**What drug interactions might there be?**

- × Should not be used whilst taking urinary alkalinises such as Ural or Citravescent as it reduces how well Hiprex works
- × It can interact with a few antibiotics, one of which is used to treat UTI's, so check with your pharmacist first before taking it
- × Can interact with other prescription medication, so check with the pharmacist first

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It is ADEC category A, however id you have a urinary tract infection you should go to your doctor to avoid any complications.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

It appears safe to use.

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

No. since you cannot use Hiprex if you are dehydrated then you should not take Hiprex.

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

✓

**DOSAGE:**

**ADULT:**

- ✓ Take 1 tablet every 12 hours

**CHILD > 6 years:**

- ✓ Take half to 1 tablet every 12 hours

**COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Hiprex 1 G

**41. HYDROCORTISONE**

**What is it used for?**

This is a topical corticosteroid that can be used for skin conditions to remove redness, itch, scales and inflammation. It can be used for eczema, dermatitis, bites and allergic skin reactions.

**When should I be careful?**

- × If you are diabetic then you should only use a small amount of cream for the shortest period of time (or better yet not at all) as it can be absorbed through the skin and increase blood glucose levels.
- × Do not use on broken or open skin or on ulcerating skin.
- × Do not use if there is any sign of infection, as steroids reduce the immune system and can cause infection to thrive.
- × Do not use for more than 1 week at a time as it can thin the skin; g to your doctor if needing it longer than this period

**What are the common side effects?**

- × Delayed wound healing
- × Depigmentation
- × Folliculitis
- × Acne flare ups
- × Thinning of the skin
- × Can get an allergic contact dermatitis if sensitive to steroids.

**What drug interactions might there be?**

- × Although used topically it can be absorbed through the skin and thus possible to have drug interactions. If taking long-term medication check with pharmacist before using it.

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It is ADEC category A and may be used at the smallest amount and for the shortest duration of time.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

It may be used whilst breast feeding with smallest amount and for the shortest duration of time. Avoid using it on or around the breast area though and apply it after the last feed.

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

It appears safe to use.

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ Use the smallest amount of cream as possible as it is strong and lasts a long time on the skin.
- ✓ This is long-acting cortisone; so only need to apply it once or twice a day as opposed to 3 to 4 times a day with Hydrocortisone.

**DOSAGE:**

Available in a 0.5% or 1 % strength. Apply a small amount 2 to 4 times a day for a maximum of 7 days at a time and then have a steroid free period.

**COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Dermaid Soft and regular in 0.5-1%
- ✓ Sigmacort ointment or cream
- ✓ Cortic DS cream or ointment

**42. HYOSCINE BUTYLBROMIDE**

**What is it used for?**

This is used to help relax the smooth muscles in the stomach to reduce cramping and pain in the stomach.

**When should I be careful?**

- × If you are having recurrent pains in the stomach then you should go to the doctor especially if there are other symptoms along with it such as vomiting, diarrhoea or loss of appetite.
- × It should only be used for short periods of time.
- × It is not to be used if there is any obstruction in the stomach or bowel
- × Heart disease such as arrhythmias and heart failure can be exacerbated with this medication
- × If you have BPH it may make symptoms worse
- × Care needs to be taken if you suffer from glaucoma
- × Elderly people tend to suffer more from side effects so use the lowest dose for the shortest time

**What are the common side effects?**

There does not appear to be a lot of side effects with Hyoscine; but the following can theoretically occur;

- × Dry mouth
- × Constipation
- × Nausea and vomiting
- × Blurred vision
- × Urinary retention
- × Arrhythmia
- × Headache
- × Hallucinations
- × confusion

**What drug interactions might there be?**

- × This can interact with SEVERAL other medications so check with the pharmacist first before taking it. Some examples include;
- × Sedating anti-histamines; have an additive side effect potential.
- × Possible to interact with other prescription medication

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It is ADEC category B2, so it is best to avoid. Also it is important to ascertain what the cramps are from as they may indicate an underlying issue that needs to be reviewed by your doctor. It is best not to ignore any pains whilst pregnant.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

It appears safe to use.

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

✓

**DOSAGE:**

**ADULTS:**

Take 10mg-20mg three to four times a day

**CHILDREN OVER 6 YEARS:**

Take 10mg three times a day

**COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Buscopan 10mg
- ✓ Buscopan Forte 20mg

**43. IBUPROFEN**

**What is it used for?**

This is an NSAID that removes pain, fever and inflammation that can be used topically or in tablet form.

**When should I be careful?**

- x Allergies to any anti-inflammatories including aspirin
- x Asthma sufferers may have their symptoms worsened if they are sensitive to anti-inflammatories
- x Stomach ulcers and burning symptoms in the stomach can be made worse with Ibuprofen, as it removes a protective chemical that normally is in the stomach lining.
- x It can cause fluid retention, therefore be careful if you have a heart or kidney disorder. It can make sufferers of heart failure and high blood pressure much worse as well as increase fluid retention. All NSAIDS can increase the risk of heart effects occurring; increasing blood pressure and reducing kidney function
- x Care needs to be taken if you have any liver disorders as you may need a much lower dose.
- x Elderly people are more likely to suffer from the side effects so care needs to be taken
- x Do not use if there is any sign of bleeding or excessive bruising as it can make it worse
- x If undergoing surgery, check with the surgeon when to stop taking it. Ideally should be at least 2-3 days prior to surgery, but there is a risk of increasing risk of stroke/heart attack.

**What are the common side effects?**

- x Nausea, heartburn/indigestion, vomiting can occur
- x Stomach ulceration can occur
- x Dizziness
- x Headache
- x Raised liver enzymes
- x Salt and fluid retention
- x Increased blood pressure
- x Can cause rash/itching in some people
- x Although infrequent; confusion, blood disorders, photosensitivity, blurred vision or tinnitus can occur
- x Allergy reactions can occur; runny nose, wheezing, tightness of the chest, worsening asthma and rash if sensitive.

**What drug interactions might there be?**

There are SEVERAL interactions so you must check with the pharmacist first before taking Ibuprofen. Some examples include;

- x The use of other anti-inflammatories both oral or topical
- x Blood pressure medication
- x Diuretics
- x Blood thinning medication
- x Acid-reducing medication; this can increase the risk of gastric bleeding and reduce effects of heartburn medications
- x Various other prescription medications

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It is ADEC category C, and is not recommended in pregnancy especially in the Third trimester. It can increase the risk of miscarriage and bleeding; however 100mg dosing may be considered safe on doctor's instructions only.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

It should be used after a feed at the lowest dose for the shortest time and monitor your child for any side effects or changes, however it can be sued.

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

No, you should not have alcohol with Ibuprofen. It can affect the liver and kidneys and increase the burning in the stomach and possibly cause an ulcer.

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ You must take Ibuprofen with food without exception,
- ✓ Stop if any signs of allergy occur
- ✓ Like all anti-inflammatories, some people respond well to one type and not another. It is trial and error to find the right one that suits you.
- ✓ You must stop taking it immediately if you have fluid retention, bleeding in the stools or are vomiting

**DOSAGE:**

**ADULTS:**

Take 200mg-400mg (1-2 tablets) every 4 to 6 hours after food, which a maximum of 6 tablets per day

Gel: apply 4-10cm to the affected area up to four times per day

**CHILDREN over 3 months:**

5-10mg/kg/dose every 6 to 8 hours

**COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Nurofen (tablets, zavance, tension, period pain, headache)
- ✓ Nurofen for Children (3month-2 years, 1-5 and 5-12 in orange and strawberry)
- ✓ Herron Blue
- ✓ Advil
- ✓ Rafen
- ✓ Dimetapp Pain and Fever relief
- ✓ Nurofen Gel

**Combination products with codeine:**

- ✓ Panafen plus
- ✓ Nurofen plus

**44. ICHTHAMMOL**

**What is it used for?**

This is a topical preparation that is used to reduce itching, redness, thickened scales and act as a mild antibacterial for the skin. It is useful for eczema, dermatitis and psoriasis. It can also be used as a drawing ointment.

**When should I be careful?**

- × It should not be used on broken or inflamed skin
- × It should not be used in children under 2 unless on doctor's advice
- × It can cause staining to the skin, hair and clothing.
- × There is conflicting evidence regarding whether or not tars cause cancer

**What are the common side effects?**

- × Stinging of the skin
- × Allergic reactions can occur
- × Folliculitis
- × Staining on the skin
- × irritation

**What drug interactions might there be?**

There does not appear to be any known or significant interactions

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

There is limited data; however it is best to avoid use unless the benefits to the mother outweigh any possible risks.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

It may be used at the lowest possible dose for the shortest possible time however do not use on the nipple area.

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

It appears to be safe to use

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ Your doctor can write a prescription for a higher containing Ichthammol cream that your pharmacist can prepare for you if the commercially available products do not work.
- ✓ have a break from treatment if redness or sensitivity occurs
- ✓ avoid any contact with the eyes as it can be very dangerous
- ✓ it appears to be less effective than coal tar but it does not produce photosensitisation

**DOSAGE:**

Apply to the affected area three times a day or as required.

**COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Ichthammol

**45. IPRATROPIUM**

**What is it used for?**

This is used to dry nasal secretions and to stop a runny nose that can be caused by allergies or the common cold.

**When should I be careful?**

- × It should not be used if there is a sinus infection, any fever or bleeding in the nose
- × If you suffer from closed angle glaucoma you should not use this medication
- × You should not use if you are allergic to the active ingredient

**What are the common side effects?**

- × Dryness in the nose
- × Nose bleeds
- × Dry mouth
- × Taste disturbances
- × Although rare; urinary retention.

**What drug interactions might there be?**

- × Although used topically it can be absorbed through the nasal passages and thus possible to have drug interactions. If taking long-term medication check with pharmacist before using it.

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It is ADEC category B1.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

It appears safe to use in lactation.

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

It appears to be safe to use.

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ It is only to be used in children over 12

**DOSAGE:**

Spray 2 sprays initially two to three times a day and then reduce to 1 spray two to three times a day when symptoms resolve a little until it is better

**COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Atrovent nasal spray

**46. IRON**

### **What is it used for?**

This is an essential element that is required by the body to form the essential parts of red blood cells which carry oxygen around the body.

### **When should I be careful?**

- × You should not use iron if you are not deficient in it which can only be determined by a blood test
- × You should not use if your anaemia is not caused by iron deficiency.
- × If you have any disorders of the stomach you should be careful as iron can irritate it

### **What are the common side effects?**

- × Constipation
- × Nausea
- × Vomiting
- × Stomach pain
- × Black coloured stools

### **What drug interactions might there be?**

- × Iron can interact with SEVERAL medications so it is best to separate it from other medications by 2 hours. Some examples include;
- × Calcium
- × Antacids
- × Antibiotics
- × Various other medications. Therefore if on long-term medications check with the pharmacist when using these.

### **Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It is ADEC category A which is safe to use.

### **Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

It is safe to use, but monitor the baby for any signs of toxicity.

### **Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

It appears safe to use, however since alcohol can be dehydrating it may worsen constipation if you tend to suffer with this side effect. Alcohol can also increase any gastric bleeding if this is the source of your loss of iron; therefore in both situations it is best to avoid its use whilst taking iron.

### **What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ It is recommended to have regular blood tests to monitor if treatment is working
- ✓ This medication is poorly absorbed so it is absorbed best if taken 1 hour before food or 2 hours after food. However, if you experience side effects then you should take it after food.
- ✓ You should not take iron with tea or coffee as it can reduce the absorption of it
- ✓ It is a good idea to drink the liquid iron through a straw to prevent discolouration of the teeth
- ✓ It is a good idea to start taking a low dose and work your way up.

### **DOSAGE:**

#### **ADULTS:**

100-200MG DAILY

#### **CHILDREN:**

2-3MG/KG DAILY

### **COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Ferrogradument (105 mg iron)
- ✓ Ferro-F (100mg iron and 350mcg folic acid)
- ✓ FGF (80mg and 300mcg folic acid)
- ✓ Ferrograd C (105mg iron and 652.4mg vitamin C)
- ✓ Fefol (87.4mg iron and 300mcg folic acid)

## **47. KETOCONAZOLE**

### **What is it used for?**

This is a topical anti-fungal cream that is used to kill the fungus and stop more from growing.

### **When should I be careful?**

**What are the common side effects?**

There are not a lot of side effects that have been reported through its use;

- × Burning and stinging to the skin
- × Possible redness due to allergic reactions

**What drug interactions might there be?**

- × Although used topically it can be absorbed through the skin and thus possible to have drug interactions. If taking long-term medication check with pharmacist before using it.

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

No, it is not recommended. It is ADEC category B3 and there are safer anti-fungal creams such as Clotrimazole.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

It is considered safe to use at the recommended dose. However, remove any cream on or around the breast area before breast feeding is done.

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

Since it is a topical cream, there does not appear to be serious risks with its consumption

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ It does not appear to be more effective than the other anti-fungals it is just that using it only once a day means that compliance is higher which can ultimately cause greater success of treatment.
- ✓ It is vital with all anti-fungal treatments that you continue using for at least 2 weeks after symptoms disappear so that the fungus is completely treated.
- ✓ Follow all the skin fungal treatment advice on page ---

**DOSAGE:**

Cream: apply to the affected area once or twice a day

Foaming solution: wet the body in the shower and then apply the sachet to the body and not washed or dried off. Wash off the following morning. Do this pm 3 consecutive nights, repeat on 1 month and then again after 3 months.

**COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Pevaryl cream
- ✓ Pevaryl Foaming Solution

**48. KETOTIFEN**

**What is it used for?**

It is an anti-histamine eye drop that is used to reduce allergic reactions/symptoms in the eye; watery, itchy, red and swollen eyes.

**When should I be careful?**

- × It should only be used if the symptoms are definitely caused by allergies. You should not guess the diagnosis with the eye.

**What are the common side effects?**

- × Stinging on instillation
- × Blurred vision on instillation
- × Dry mouth
- × Dry eye can occur
- × Although rare; sedation may occur
- × Mild eye irritation

**What drug interactions might there be?**

*There does not appear to be any known or significant interactions*

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It is ADEC category B1, however it is not recommended to be used in the 1<sup>st</sup> trimester and with caution in the second and third trimester. If you are going to use it you can minimise the risk by holding the tear ducts for 2 minutes after instilling the drops to prevent it from getting into the blood stream.

### **Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

It is unknown whether ketotifen passes through the milk, and since the eye drop lasts 12 hours a shorter acting eye drop would be preferred.

### **Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

It appears to be safe to use.

### **What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ Avoid the trigger factors for your allergies so that you can minimise the use of the eye drop.
- ✓ It can be used in children over 3 years
- ✓ It is not to be used with contact lenses; you should take them out for 15 minutes.
- ✓ The single use vials are preservative free
- ✓ The bottle must be discarded after 28 days

### **DOSAGE:**

For children > 3 years: 1 drop twice a day (every 12 hours)

### **COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Zaditen bottle
- ✓ Zaditen single use eye drops (preservative free)

## **49. LACTULOSE**

### **What is it used for?**

This is a type of 'osmotic laxative' that draws water into the stools to help treat constipation.

### **When should I be careful?**

- x It should not be used in any obstruction in the bowel
- x You should not use it if you have lactose or galactose intolerance
- x You are required to have adequate hydration in the body for it to be effective

### **What are the common side effects?**

- x Wind/gas
- x Stomach pain and cramps
- x Diarrhoea may occur if taking too much of it
- x Electrolyte imbalances may occur with long term or excessive doses

### **What drug interactions might there be?**

*There does not appear to be any known or significant interactions*

### **Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It does not have ADEC classification however it appears safe to use in pregnancy at the recommended dose.

### **Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

It appears safe to use in breastfeeding; monitor the baby for any side effects and stop if this occurs.

### **Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

Lactulose requires water to work well, so alcohol can dehydrate the system and cause it not to work as well as it should.

### **What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ It can be used in children over 1 month
- ✓ Remain hydrated and follow the constipation advice given on page ---
- ✓ It is a very sweet liquid so it may be easier to mix with water, fruit juice or milk
- ✓ It works within 1 to 3 days

### **DOSAGE:**

#### **ADULT:**

Initially take 15-30 mL daily to a maximum of 60 mL daily.

Maintenance is 10-25mL once daily

#### **CHILDREN:**

1 month-12 months: 2.5 mL twice daily

1-5 years: 5 mL twice daily

5-10 years: 10 mL twice daily

**COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Actilax
- ✓ Duphalac
- ✓ GenRx Lactulose
- ✓ Genlac

**50. LEVOCETIRAZINE**

**What is it used for?**

This is a non-drowsy once a day anti-histamine used for symptoms caused by an allergic reaction; watery and itchy eyes, sneezing, runny nose, itchy throat, itchy skin and rash.

**When should I be careful?**

- × Although preferred to the drowsy anti-histamines, care needs to be taken in the elderly population as they are more likely to suffer from the side effects listed.
- × If you have any disorders of the kidney, then your dose will need to be adjusted so consult your doctor first.

**What are the common side effects?**

There are far fewer side effects than the older style sedating anti-histamines so are the preferred medication of choice if it works for you.

- × Headache
- × Nausea
- × Dry mouth

**What drug interactions might there be?**

*There does not appear to be any known or significant interactions*

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It is ADEC category B2 and is not recommended to be used in pregnancy.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

There is limited data; and therefore is not recommended to be used at all.

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

*It appears safe to use.*

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ All people react differently to different anti-histamines, so it is a matter of trial and error to find the right one for you.
- ✓ People can get used to one type of anti-histamine when used for an extended period. Which means, if it is becoming less effective then stop taking it and try another non-drowsy anti-histamine and keep switching as needed.
- ✓ Follow the lifestyle advice given for allergies on page----
- ✓ If you are undergoing a skin-prick allergy test, then stop taking the anti-histamine at least 4 days before as it may affect the results.
- ✓ Dosage reduction is needed for kidney impairment

**DOSAGE:**

Available for adults only: 5mg once daily

**COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Xyzal 5mg

**51. LEVONORGESTREL**

**What is it used for?**

This is used over-the-counter as the Morning After Pill for emergency contraception to be used within 72 hours after unprotected sexual intercourse.

**When should I be careful?**

- × If you have any history of blood clotting disorders as this may increase the risk of having a clot
- × If you have any unexplained vaginal bleeding or irregular bleeding then you should see your doctor prior to taking this medication as it may make it worse
- × It should not be used in children under 16 years over-the-counter and will need to go to the doctor

- × You must not use this medication if you are already pregnant. It increases your chance of an ectopic pregnancy which can be very severe
- × Care should be taken if you have any serious liver disorders as it may put further strain in the liver
- × Care needs to be taken if you have experienced vomiting or diarrhoea in the preceding 2 hours as it may reduce the effectiveness of the medication and therefore not be as effective

**What are the common side effects?**

- × Nausea and vomiting
- × Dizziness
- × Headache
- × Blood clotting
- × Irregular or unusual bleeding

**What drug interactions might there be?**

- × Epileptic medications can reduce how well it works so you may require a higher dose
- × *St John's Wort*?
- × Warfarin; it can affect the INR and increase the risk of bleeding. Monitor it very closely
- × Antibiotics may reduce the effectiveness of Levonorgestrel
- × Xenical may reduce the effectiveness of it

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

NO. If you are pregnant or are not sure if you are already pregnant then you MUST not take the Morning After Pill. Its use increases the risk of the pregnancy being ectopic; which is where the baby will grow outside the uterus which can be very dangerous.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

*It is not to be used whilst breastfeeding and it is recommended to find alternative food sources for the baby for 72 hours whilst it is in your system. It will be advisable to discard the milk during this time.*

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

The morning after pill is known to cause nausea and vomiting so it is best to avoid alcohol as it may increase the chances of this occurring. Also, it can be more taxing to the liver since you are taking a high dose of hormone. Lastly, if the tablet does not work and you are pregnant then you should not be consuming alcohol whilst you are pregnant.

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ It is advisable to take the dose with food to minimise the side effects of nausea and vomiting
- ✓ It may cause dizziness or headache; so be careful if driving or having to go to work
- ✓ You can only obtain it over-the-counter if you are over 16
- ✓ You may experience spotting or irregular bleeding anywhere from a few days after taking the tablet or throughout your cycle. If you have very heavy bleeding you should go to your doctor.
- ✓ If your period is late or much lighter than normal then you should take a pregnancy test
- ✓ If you experience any pain in the legs or signs of clotting especially if you are at risk, then you should see your doctor ASAP
- ✓ This is not to be used as a long term contraception; only in an emergency

**DOSAGE:**

Take 1 tablet as a single dose after food as soon as possible within 72 hours; however it is more effective the earlier it is taken.

**COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Levonelle-1
- ✓ Postinor-1
- ✓ Norlevo-1

**52. LIGNOCAINE**

**What is it used for?**

This is a local anaesthetic that is used on the skin to provide relief of pain and itching.

**When should I be careful?**

- × Care should be taken if handling anything hot due to the risk of burning.
- × Since it masks pain, care needs to be taken not to overuse it as it may be masking an infection

**What are the common side effects?**

- × Irritation, sensitivity of the skin.

**What drug interactions might there be?**

- × Although used topically and absorption is low, it is possible that it can be absorbed enough through the skin to have drug interactions. If taking long-term medication check with pharmacist before using it. Especially if they are for your heart or epilepsy.

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It is ADEC category A, and may be used short term.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

It may be used whilst breast feeding.

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

It appears safe to use.

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

✓

**DOSAGE:**

Apply to the affected area three to 4 times a day.

If used in combination with Prilocaine;

**EMLA:** use the cream and put a dressing on top 60 minutes before the procedure and should last up to 2 hours.

< 3 months: 1 G

3-12 months: 2 G

1-6 years: 10 G

6-12 years: 20 G

**COMMON BRANDS:**

- × Ego Soov
- × Xylocaine (jelly 2%, liquid 4%, viscous 2%, ointment 5%, spray 10%)
- × Emla (2.5% lignocaine and 2.5% prilocaine)

**53. LIQUID PARAFFIN**

**What is it used for?**

This is stool softener that is used to draw water into the stools and lubricates the faeces to treat constipation

**When should I be careful?**

- × You will need to drink plenty of water to help make the medication work well
- × You cannot lie down for 1 hour after taking the liquid
- × It may reduce the absorption of fat soluble vitamins ADEK
- × Do not give dosage at bedtime or to people that cannot remain upright.

**What are the common side effects?**

- × Stomach cramps
- × Diarrhoea if you take too much
- × If you use a high dose or for a long period of time, it may cause anal leakage or irritation.

**What drug interactions might there be?**

*There does not appear to be any known or significant interactions*

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It does not have an ADEC category, so only an occasional use is recommended. Avoid repeated use as it may impair the mother's absorption of fat soluble vitamins.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

It is uncertain whether it passes through the milk, so only short term dosing is recommended and monitors the baby. There are more suitable options that are safer.

### **Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

Alcohol causes dehydration and so may cause Liquid Paraffin to not work as well as it requires water to soften the stools. I would recommend avoiding it. Also since Paraffin can cause aspiration it is not a good idea to combine this with alcohol.

### **What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ Drink lots of water
- ✓ Short term use only as it can cause malabsorption issues.
- ✓ It can take up to 2 to 3 days for it to work well.
- ✓ Only to use for children over 1 year

### **DOSAGE:**

#### **ADULTS:**

40mL once daily

#### **CHILDREN:**

1-6 years: 15mL once daily

7-12 years: 20mL once daily

### **COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Parachoc 50%
- ✓ Agarol 32%

## **54. LOPERAMIDE**

### **What is it used for?**

This is a codeine based ingredient that is used to treat diarrhoea.

### **When should I be careful?**

- × It must not be used in any obstruction or inflammation of the bowel.
- × It must not be used in severe liver disease
- × It is not to be used in children under 12.
- × It has less ability to be addictive than codeine; however it is still only recommended for short term use.
- × If epileptic, care needs to be taken before using codeine as it may increase the risk of a seizure.
- × Loperamide can cause respiratory depression, therefore in patients with lung disorders such as asthma, emphysema or similar; then care needs to be taken as breathing can be suppressed which is very dangerous.
- × If you have any disorders of the kidney or liver then you must visit your doctor as dose reductions and monitoring will need to be done.
- × The older the person gets the lower dose of codeine they should need and use. It can increase their risks of confusion, drowsiness and then falls
- × It can interact with a lot of medication; so care needs to be taken

### **What are the common side effects?**

- × Nausea, vomiting, upset stomach, bloating
- × Constipation can occur if you take too much
- × Dizziness, especially on standing up
- × Drowsiness
- × Rebound headaches
- × Dry mouth
- × Itchy skin and/or rash
- × Respiratory depression
- × confusion

### **What drug interactions might there be?**

*There is only one known interaction with a prescription anti-viral. However all the usual codeine interactions do not appear to be an issue with Loperamide.*

### **Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It is ADEC category B3, and it is not recommended in the first trimester but 1 dose may be used with caution in the second and third trimester. Risk VS benefits; as if the mother is getting dehydrated then this poses a risk too.

### **Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

1 dose may be used with caution and the baby needs to be monitored.

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

No, not only will it increase the effects of alcohol if you have diarrhoea you are likely to suffer from dehydration and alcohol may make this way.

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ Diarrhoea should only last 48 hours if it gets worse then go to the Dr as it may be an infection
- ✓ Only used for Adults over 12 not for children

**DOSAGE:**

Take 2 immediately then take 1 tablet after each bowel motion to a maximum of 8 tablets in 24 hours.

**COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Imodium
- ✓ Gastro Stop
- ✓ Diareze

**55. LORATADINE**

**What is it used for?**

This is a non-drowsy once a day anti-histamine used for symptoms caused by an allergic reaction; watery and itchy eyes, sneezing, runny nose, itchy throat, itchy skin and rash.

**When should I be careful?**

- × Although preferred to the drowsy anti-histamines, care needs to be taken in the elderly population as they are more likely to suffer from the side effects listed.
- × If you have any disorders of the kidney, then your dose will need to be adjusted so consult your doctor first.
- × If you have any disorders of the liver, then you should consult your doctor first as you may need to lower your dosage

**What are the common side effects?**

There are far fewer side effects than the older style sedating anti-histamines so are the preferred medication of choice if it works for you.

- × Headache
- × Nausea
- × Dry mouth

**What drug interactions might there be?**

*There does appear to be any known or significant interactions*

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It is ADEC category B1 and ideally should not be used, but may be considered suitable if a drowsy anti-histamine cannot be used.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

This is the only non-sedating antihistamine that MAY be used but only if the benefits outweigh the risks to the child.

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

It appears safe to use.

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ All people react differently to different anti-histamines, so it is a matter of trial and error to find the right one for you.
- ✓ People can get used to one type of anti-histamine when used for an extended period. Which means, if it is becoming less effective then stop taking it and try another non-drowsy anti-histamine and keep switching as needed.
- ✓ Follow the lifestyle advice given for allergies on page---
- ✓ If you are undergoing a skin-prick allergy test, then stop taking the anti-histamine at least 4 days before as it may affect the results.

**DOSAGE:**

**Adults and**

**children > 30mg:** 10mg once daily

**Children: 1-2 years:** 2.5mg once daily

**2-12 years:** 5mg once daily (< 30kg)

**COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Claratyne 10mg tablets
- ✓ Allereze 10mg
- ✓ Claratyne liquid 1mg/mL
- ✓ Lorapaed 1mg/mL

**56. MAGNESIUM HYDROXIDE**

**What is it used for?**

This is used as an antacid to neutralise the acid in the stomach which will reduce the burning symptoms.

**When should I be careful?**

- × Magnesium can cause diarrhoea, so care needs to be taken if you are suffering from diarrhoea.
- × It should not be used if you have kidney disorders as it may accumulate in the body.

**What are the common side effects?**

- × Diarrhoea

**What drug interactions might there be?**

- × Separate from ALL medications by 2 hours as it can affect the absorption of them (Iron, Calcium, Anti-histamines)
- × It can interact with a range of medications, if taking long-term medication check with pharmacist before taking

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It is ADEC category A and may be used short term, but Calcium carbonate based antacids are preferred, like Andrew Tums or Rennie's.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

It can be used whilst feeding, take after the last feed and monitor the baby for any side effects.

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

It appears to be safe, however since alcohol can increase gastric acid it can make the symptoms of heartburn worse so the tablet won't work as well as it should.

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ It should be separated from other medications by 2 hours as it can bind to it.
- ✓ It produces the best results when you take them 1 to 3 hours after meals.

**DOSAGE:**

**COMMON BRANDS:**

There are no antacids with magnesium on its own, they are in combination with other ingredients;

**Magnesium and aluminium**

- ✓ Gelusil
- ✓ Mylanta Original
- ✓ Mylanta Double Strength
- ✓ Mylanta P
- ✓ Gastrogel

**Magnesium, Aluminium, Calcium and sodium salts**

- ✓ Mylanta heartburn relief

**Magnesium, aluminium and Sodium Salts**

- ✓ Gaviscon relief
- ✓ Mylanta heartburn relief

**Magnesium and Calcium Salts**

- ✓ Mylanta roll tabs
- ✓ Rennie spearmint flavour

**Magnesium and Sodium Salts**

- ✓ Salvital

**57. MALDISON**

**What is it used for?**

This is used to treat head lice that are available in a lotion and shampoo form.

**When should I be careful?**

- × If you are taking suxamethonium you should not use maldison
- × Do not use whilst taking anticholinesterases
- × It cannot be used in children under 1 year
- × Lice can become resistant to this ingredient if used quite a lot
- × Do not use on broken or inflamed skin on the scalp
- × It is not to be used in pregnancy
- × It does require a long application time as opposed to the other treatments available

**What are the common side effects?**

There are not a lot of side effects that have been reported;

- × Stinging
- × Irritation
- × Allergic contact dermatitis

**What drug interactions might there be?**

- × Although it is used topically on the scalp, it can in theory interact with a few prescription medications. If you are taking long-term medication then check with the pharmacist first before using this product.

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It is ADEC category B2, permethrin is preferred to use during pregnancy.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

It is not recommended until further information is available; but Permethrin is considered safer to use.

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ It is a good idea to wear gloves and wash hair thoroughly
- ✓ Allow the hair to dry naturally without the use of hair
- ✓ Shampoo is preferred in asthmatic people and small children

**DOSAGE:**

**LOTION:**

Apply the lotion to the dry hair and leave in for 8 to 12 hours then wash out. Use a fine tooth comb to remove the head lice.

**SHAMPOO:**

Apply the shampoo to dry or a little bit of wet hair and lather. Rinse out.

**COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ KP 24 Lotion 0.5%
- ✓ KP 24 shampoo 1%

**58. MEBENDZOLE**

**What is it used for?**

It is used to treat threadworm which is the most common type of worm infection in Australia.

**When should I be careful?**

×

**What are the common side effects?**

Side effects are not very common in the over-the-counter products available;

- × Headache
- × Nausea
- × Vomiting
- × Diarrhoea
- × Stomach pain

- × Hypersensitivity reactions; rash, itch
- × Rare side effect with mebendazole: tinnitus, weakness and drowsiness

**What drug interactions might there be?**

- × This can interact with some epilepsy medication. It is best to check with the pharmacist first before taking it;
- × Carbamazepine
- × Phenytoin

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It is ADEC category B3 and is not to be used whilst pregnant.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

It possible that it can pass through the milk, so is not recommended to use

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ It is best to take after food to avoid any of the side effects of the stomach
- ✓ You should treat everyone in the same household at the same time so that reinfestation can occur
- ✓ You should change the bedding and clean the toilets all the time
- ✓ You can re-treat if symptoms persist after 2 to 4 weeks

**DOSAGE:**

It is suitable for children over 2 years.

Adults and children over 2: 100mg as a single dose

**COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Vermox 100mg
- ✓ Combantrin-1 with mebendazole
- ✓ Vermox liquid 20mg/mL

**59. MEFANAMIC ACID**

**What is it used for?**

This is an NSAID that removes pain, fever and inflammation that is marketed for period pain relief. It has the unique ability to help reduce heavy bleeding.

**When should I be careful?**

- × Allergies to any anti-inflammatories including aspirin
- × Asthma sufferers may have their symptoms worsened if they are sensitive to anti-inflammatories
- × Stomach ulcers and burning symptoms in the stomach can be made worse with Ibuprofen, as it removes a protective chemical that normally is in the stomach lining.
- × It can cause fluid retention, therefore be careful if you have a heart or kidney disorder. It can make sufferers of heart failure and high blood pressure much worse as well as increase fluid retention. All NSAIDS can increase the risk of heart effects occurring; increasing blood pressure and reducing kidney function
- × Care needs to be taken if you have any liver disorders as you may need a much lower dose.
- × Elderly people are more likely to suffer from the side effects so care needs to be taken
- × Do not use if there is any sign of bleeding or excessive bruising as it can make it worse
- × If undergoing surgery, check with the surgeon when to stop taking it. Ideally should be at least 2-3 days prior to surgery, but there is a risk of increasing risk of stroke/heart attack.

**What are the common side effects?**

- × Nausea, heartburn/indigestion, vomiting can occur
- × Diarrhoea can commonly occur with this anti-inflammatory
- × Stomach ulceration can occur
- × Dizziness
- × Headache
- × Raised liver enzymes
- × Salt and fluid retention
- × Increased blood pressure
- × Can cause rash/itching in some people

- × Although infrequent; confusion, blood disorders, photosensitivity, blurred vision or tinnitus can occur
- × Allergy reactions can occur; runny nose, wheezing, tightness of the chest, worsening asthma and rash if sensitive.

**What drug interactions might there be?**

There are SEVERAL interactions so you must check with the pharmacist first before taking Mefenamic Acid. Some examples include;

- × The use of other anti-inflammatories both oral or topical
- × Blood pressure medication
- × Diuretics
- × Blood thinning medication
- × Acid-reducing medication; this can increase the risk of gastric bleeding and reduce effects of heartburn medications
- × Various other prescription medications

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It is ADEC category C, and is not recommended in pregnancy especially in the Third trimester. It can increase the risk of miscarriage and bleeding; however 100mg dosing may be considered safe on doctor's instructions only.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

It should be used after a feed at the lowest dose for the shortest time and monitor your child for any side effects or changes, however it can be sued.

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

No, you should not have alcohol with Mefenamic Acid. It can affect the liver and kidneys and increase the burning in the stomach and possibly cause an ulcer.

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ You must take Mefenamic Acid with food without exception,
- ✓ Stop if any signs of allergy occur
- ✓ Like all anti-inflammatories, some people respond well to one type and not another. It is trial and error to find the right one that suits you.
- ✓ You must stop taking it immediately if you have fluid retention, bleeding in the stools or are vomiting

**DOSAGE:**

**ADULTS:**

500mg (2 tablets) three times a day with food

**CHILDREN:**

25mg/kg/ day in three divided doses

**COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Ponstan 250mg

**60. METOCLOPRAMIDE**

**What is it used for?**

It is used to treat nausea and vomiting associated with migraines over-the-counter. It is used to treat various other conditions on prescription from your doctor but not used for any other purpose OTC.

**When should I be careful?**

- × If you suffer from Parkinson's disease taking Metoclopramide may make symptoms worse
- × If you suffer from depression, avoid long-term use as it may worsen mental state
- × It needs to be used in caution in people under 20 years old as there is an increased risk of tremor
- × If you have any kidney disorders then care needs to be taken as it may cause an increased effect and thus side effects
- × If you are elderly, you are more likely to suffer from side effects

**What are the common side effects?**

- × Drowsiness
- × Dizziness
- × Headache
- × Feelings of restlessness
- × Although rare: depression, tremor, increased blood pressure, diarrhoea and constipation

**What drug interactions might there be?**

- × This medication blocks the effects of dopamine so it can interact with various medications. You MUST inform the pharmacist of any medications that you take as it may cause serious complication

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It is ADEC category A and considered safe.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

It is considered safe to use, however monitor the baby for signs of side effects.

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

No, you cannot as it will increase drowsiness and dizziness. Also alcohol may increase nausea especially if you are suffering from a migraine you should avoid alcohol.

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ It can make you feel dizzy and drowsy so do not drive until you see how it affects you.

**DOSAGE:**

It is available with Paracetamol 500mg; take 1-2 tablets every 4 to 6 hours, maximum of 8 tablets per day.

**COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Anagrain
- ✓ Metomax

**61. MICONAZOLE**

**What is it used for?**

This is a topical anti-fungal cream that is used to kill the fungus and stop more from growing.

**When should I be careful?**

**What are the common side effects?**

There are not a lot of side effects that have been reported through its use;

- × Burning and stinging to the skin
- × Possible redness due to allergic reactions

**What drug interactions might there be?**

- × Although used topically it can be absorbed through the skin and thus possible to have drug interactions. If taking long-term medication check with pharmacist before using it.

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

Yes, it is ADEC category A and is considered safe in all trimesters of pregnancy.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

It is considered safe to use at the recommended dose. However, remove any cream on or around the breast area before breast feeding is done.

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

It appears safe to use.

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ It does not appear to be more effective than the other anti-fungals it is just that using it only once a day means that compliance is higher which can ultimately cause greater success of treatment.
- ✓ It is vital with all anti-fungal treatments that you continue using for at least 2 weeks after symptoms disappear so that the fungus is completely treated.
- ✓ Follow all the skin fungal treatment advice on page ---

**DOSAGE:**

**SKIN:** Apply to the affected area 2 to 3 times a day until symptoms resolve and for two weeks thereafter.

**ORAL THRUSH:**

**Adults:** half a teaspoon four times a day after food swishes around the mouth and gently swallow.

**Children:** over 6 months old: a quarter of a teaspoon four times a day around the mouth

**COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Daktarin (cream, tincture, lotion, powder)
- ✓ Daktarin Oral Gel
- ✓ Resolve (cream, solution, powder)

**Combination products:**

- ✓ Daktozin
- ✓ resolve plus 0.5-1%

**62. MINOXIDIL****What is it used for?**

This is used topically to assist in the regrowth of hair in both men and women when they are suffering from hair loss.

**When should I be careful?**

- × If you are experiencing hair loss you should obtain a blood test first to ensure nothing else is occurring
- × Do not use on broken or inflamed skin
- × Do not wear a wig, scarf or hat for at least 1 hour after application as it may increase its absorption through the skin causing more side effects

**What are the common side effects?**

- × Mild dermatitis
- × Irritation may occur

**What drug interactions might there be?**

*There does not appear to be any known or significant interactions with its use*

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

If you are experiencing hair loss through pregnancy, see your doctor. This product should not be used.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

If you are experiencing hair loss through pregnancy, see your doctor. This product should not be used with caution.

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

It appears safe to use in moderation

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ The product needs to be used for at least 4 months of continuous treatment to see whether it is working
- ✓ You should stop using it after using for 12 months if no benefit has been seen
- ✓ Cosmetically acceptable hair growth occurs in 10% of the population

**DOSAGE:**

Apply 1mL to the affected area twice a day

**COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Rogaine for Men Regular strength 2%
- ✓ Rogaine for Women 2%
- ✓ Rogaine for Men extra strength 5%
- ✓ Hair-A-gain 5%

**63. NAPHAZOLINE****What is it used for?**

This is used to constrict the blood vessels in the eye to reduce redness and possible discomfort.

**When should I be careful?**

- × These should only be used short term, up to 5 days as it can cause rebound redness i.e. your eyes become used to the medication and remain red
- × You must not use this if you have any serious eye disorders as it may increase the pressure within the eye
- × You should see your doctor if there is still redness after 48 hours of using them
- × You must discard contents after 28 days of opening it as you may get an eye infection

- × You should not wear contact lenses whilst using this drop. Remove the lens and wait 15 minutes after putting the drops in before putting the lenses back into your eye.

**What are the common side effects?**

- × Rebound redness occurs when you use for longer than 5 days in a row
- × Stinging on instillation
- × Blurred vision
- × Changes in eye pressure

**What drug interactions might there be?**

- × Although used topically it can be absorbed from the eyes into the blood stream and thus possible to have drug interactions. If taking long-term medication check with pharmacist before using it.

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It is not listed with an ADEC category, so it should only be used for a couple of days if there is no other option to use. If you can avoid it, it is the safest option.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

It is unknown whether Naphazoline enters breast milk. Consider the use of it short term and hold the tear ducts for 3 minutes to reduce systemic absorption and monitor the baby for any side effects.

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

It appears safe to use.

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

- × Once you have put in the drop, close your eye gently and press the inner corner of your eye where your tear duct is and press for at least 3 minutes. This will reduce how much of the medication is absorbed into the blood stream.
- × If you need to instil another drop wait 5 minutes before putting in the second drop.
- × Try and ascertain the cause of the redness so you can correct this rather than keep using the drops. i.e. if it caused by dry eye then consider using a lubricant eye drop instead, minimise smoke and stay away from air-conditioning and wind.

**DOSAGE:**

Instil 1 drop every 6 to 12 hours as required.

**COMMON BRANDS:**

Single ingredient:

- ✓ Murine Clear Eyes
- ✓ Albalon
- ✓ Naphcon Forte

Combination product:

- ✓ Optrex
- ✓ Naphcon-A
- ✓ Visine Allergy with Antihistamine
- ✓ Albalon-A

**64. NAPROXEN**

**What is it used for?**

This is an NSAID that removes pain, fever and inflammation that is marketed for period pain relief.

**When should I be careful?**

- × Allergies to any anti-inflammatories including aspirin
- × Asthma sufferers may have their symptoms worsened if they are sensitive to anti-inflammatories
- × Stomach ulcers and burning symptoms in the stomach can be made worse with Ibuprofen, as it removes a protective chemical that normally is in the stomach lining.
- × It can cause fluid retention, therefore be careful if you have a heart or kidney disorder. It can make sufferers of heart failure and high blood pressure much worse as well as increase fluid retention. All NSAIDS can increase the risk of heart effects occurring; increasing blood pressure and reducing kidney function
- × Care needs to be taken if you have any liver disorders as you may need a much lower dose.
- × Elderly people are more likely to suffer from the side effects so care needs to be taken
- × Do not use if there is any sign of bleeding or excessive bruising as it can make it worse

- × If undergoing surgery, check with the surgeon when to stop taking it. Ideally should be at least 2-3 days prior to surgery, but there is a risk of increasing risk of stroke/heart attack.

**What are the common side effects?**

- × Nausea, heartburn/indigestion, vomiting can occur
- × Diarrhoea can commonly occur with this anti-inflammatory
- × Stomach ulceration can occur
- × Dizziness
- × Headache
- × Raised liver enzymes
- × Salt and fluid retention
- × Increased blood pressure
- × Can cause rash/itching in some people
- × Although infrequent; confusion, blood disorders, photosensitivity, blurred vision or tinnitus can occur
- × Allergy reactions can occur; runny nose, wheezing, tightness of the chest, worsening asthma and rash if sensitive.

**What drug interactions might there be?**

There are SEVERAL interactions so you must check with the pharmacist first before taking Naproxen. Some examples include;

- × The use of other anti-inflammatories both oral or topical
- × Blood pressure medication
- × Diuretics
- × Blood thinning medication
- × Acid-reducing medication; this can increase the risk of gastric bleeding and reduce effects of heartburn medications
- × Various other prescription medications

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It is ADEC category C, and is not recommended in pregnancy especially in the Third trimester. It can increase the risk of miscarriage and bleeding; however 100mg dosing may be considered safe on doctor's instructions only.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

It should be used after a feed at the lowest dose for the shortest time and monitor your child for any side effects or changes, however it can be sued.

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

No, you should not have alcohol with Naproxen. It can affect the liver and kidneys and increase the burning in the stomach and possibly cause an ulcer.

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ You must take Naproxen with food without exception,
- ✓ Stop if any signs of allergy occur
- ✓ Like all anti-inflammatories, some people respond well to one type and not another. It is trial and error to find the right one that suits you.
- ✓ You must stop taking it immediately if you have fluid retention, bleeding in the stools or are vomiting

**DOSAGE:**

Take 1 tablet every 6 to 8 hours after food

**COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Naprogesic 275mg

**65. NICOTINE**

**What is it used for?**

This is the active ingredient in cigarettes that is habit forming; hence it is used to reduce cravings and withdrawal symptoms when you are quitting smoking.

**When should I be careful?**

Although the same risks plus many more are present when you are actually smoking cigarettes, the risks occur with the active ingredient Nicotine as it is a drug/medication;

- × Care needs to be taken if you have had a recent stroke, heart attack, arrhythmia or any other serious condition.
- × If you have any mouth inflammation or inflammation of the gut then nicotine can exacerbate it.
- × If you suffer from asthma then you should avoid the inhaler

- × If you have sensitive skin then you should avoid using the patches
- × If you wear dentures, you should not use the gum as it can irritate the gums

**What are the common side effects?**

- × Dizziness
- × Headache
- × Nausea
- × Vomiting
- × Hiccups
- × Increase in blood pressure
- × Stomach pain and indigestion
- × Vivid dreams (especially the 24 hour patch)
- × Palpitations
- × Increased heart rate
- × Chest pain
- × Arrhythmia

**What drug interactions might there be?**

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

Although it is ADEC category D, they are safer than cigarettes due to there not being any tars etc. in there. It would be advisable to wean off them as quickly as possible. Short acting products would be the safest option; i.e. lozenges or gum as opposed to the patches.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

Again, the risk is less than cigarette smoking. However high nicotine levels in the milk can cause vomiting, diarrhoea, restlessness and increased heart rate in babies. The aim will be to come off them as quickly as possible and use short acting products.

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

Alcohol can be a trigger factor to want to smoke in some social settings. Therefore, not drinking may increase the chances of successfully quitting.

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ Although there is no 'hard and fast' rules as to how long you should be at every phase; as NRT is safer than cigarette smoking. A guideline is 12 weeks to come off completely.
- ✓ Try and gain support from all family and friends
- ✓ Take up a hobby to fill in the time that you would normally spend smoking.

**COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Nicorette
- ✓ Nicotinnell
- ✓ Nicabate
- ✓ Quit X

**66. NYSTATIN**

**What is it used for?**

This is an anti-fungal agent used to treat vaginal thrush and oral thrush over-the-counter.

**When should I be careful?**

×

**What are the common side effects?**

This is extremely well tolerated and not many adverse effects have been reported.

- × Irritation may occur on the skin
- × Allergic reactions in those sensitive

**What drug interactions might there be?**

There does not appear to be any known or significant interactions

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It is ADEC category A and is safe to use in the drops for oral thrush and is safe to use without the use of the applicator for the vaginal cream.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

It is considered safe to use whilst breast feeding. If you are treating oral thrush for your baby then you should be treating your nipples with the drops to prevent cross-infection again and again.

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

It appears safe to use.

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ The drops are easy to use for children as it is not very thick and does not have age restrictions like miconazole oral gel
- ✓ You will need to use the cream for at least 2 weeks after symptoms have resolved
- ✓ Symptomatic relief will occur after 24-72 hours after using products

**DOSAGE:**

**VAGINAL CREAM:** apply to the vagina with the use of applicator once to twice daily

**TOPICAL CREAM:** apply the cream to the affected area two to four times a day

**ORAL DROPS:** 1 mL four times a day after food and swishes it around your mouth for as long as possible and then gently swallows

**COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Nilstat oral drops
- ✓ Nilstat vaginal cream
- ✓ Mycostatin cream

**67. OMEPRAZOLE**

**What is it used for?**

This is a medication in the family of drugs called 'Proton Pump Inhibitors'. It is used to suppress the production of acid in the stomach thereby used to treat symptoms of reflux and stomach ulcers.

**When should I be careful?**

- × If you have only started to get symptoms and they are becoming recurrent you must go to your doctor before treatment
- × If you have any liver disorders then you may need a lower dose as it may cause accumulation in the body
- × It should not be used if there are any allergies to omeprazole

**What are the common side effects?**

They are generally well tolerated.

- × Headache
- × Nausea
- × Vomiting
- × Diarrhoea
- × Stomach pain
- × Constipation
- × Gas/wind
- × Itch/rash
- × Dizziness
- × Drowsiness
- × Reduced absorption if vitamin B12
- × Raised liver enzymes
- × Taste disturbances
- × Although rare, can cause hair loss and a type of anaemia.

**What drug interactions might there be?**

- × There are SEVERAL interactions that can occur so it is vital that you tell the pharmacist when taking this medication
- × One example; St John's Wort can reduce how well Omeprazole works

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It is ADEC category B3, therefore it is best avoided. Ranitidine is preferred to be used if pregnant with severe heartburn symptoms. However calcium carbonate antacids are the safest and the medication of choice wherever possible.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

Although it appears that a small amount of medication passes through the milk, and it should only be used in caution on advice from your doctor. Antacids such as calcium carbonate are the medication of choice wherever possible.

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

Alcohol increases acid secretion in the stomach so it will reduce how well the medication works. It is best to avoid it wherever possible.

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ If you are having recurrent symptoms then you must see your doctor
- ✓ All lifestyle modifications on page --- should be followed wherever possible to minimise the need for medication
- ✓ Only a small quantity is available over-the-counter so it is only intended for short term use.

**DOSAGE:**

Take a 20mg tablet once daily

**COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Losec 20mg 7's or 14's
- ✓ Probitor 20mg 7's or 14's

**68. ORLISTAT**

**What is it used for?**

This is a medication that inhibits the body absorbing 30% of fat consumed in food to assist in weight loss. It can only be used in obesity, which is classified as having a BMI of > 30 or >27 with other heart risk factors.

**When should I be careful?**

- × It can interfere with the absorption of fat soluble vitamins so if you have any nutritional deficiencies then you need to be careful.
- × It cannot be used if you have a lower than 30 BMI or < 27 BMI
- × It cannot be used if you have any stomach related disorder such as malabsorption disorders or after surgery.
- × If you have any kidney related disorders you need to be careful
- × It cannot be used if you have certain liver disorders
- × If you suffer from severe diarrhoea you should not use it

**What are the common side effects?**

- × Loose, fat and oily stools occur
- × Faecal urgency and incontinence may occur
- × Headache
- × Fatigue
- × Hepatitis (hence you cannot use if you have kidney disorders)

**What drug interactions might there be?**

- × It reduces the absorption of fat soluble vitamins; may need extra vitamins
- × It can interact with various prescription medications so be sure to inform the pharmacist when buying this product;
- × Example: the contraceptive pill can reduce how well it the pill works

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

Using weight loss drugs is not appropriate whilst pregnant especially this one as it can reduce the absorption of fat soluble vitamins. Although it is ADEC category B1, it is not recommended to use.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

Although there is not a large amount that passes through milk; it may impair nutrition to the infant and mother so should not be used.

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

If you are trying to lose weight then you should avoid alcohol as it can increase calorific content and cause fluid retention. However it may further impair liver function which is a problem with Orlistat and may further impair nutrition. So it is not recommended.

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ Weight loss after 1 year of taking the medication averages 10% when you take it with a low fat diet
- ✓ This medication plus lifestyle changes decreased the incidence of type 2 diabetes over a 4 year period by 45%.
- ✓ You need to take vitamins with this; but 2 hours apart.
- ✓ You should separate all your medication by 2 hours

**DOSAGE:**

Take 1 tablet up to 1 hour after taking your meal.

If you skip a meal or eat a meal that contains no fat then you do not need to take the dose.

**COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Xenical 120mg

**69. OXYMETAZOLINE**

**What is it used for?**

This is a topical decongestant that is used to reduce a blocked and stuffy nose.

**When should I be careful?**

- × It should not be used for longer than 5 days in a row as it can cause rebound congestion
- × Although topical, there are certain antidepressants that cannot be taken whilst using this as it can cause an increase in blood pressure which can be dangerous.
- × It is not to be used when the nose is bleeding
- × It is not to be used if there are any signs of infection; coloured mucus or fever
- × It is not to be used in children under 6 years of age and between 6-11 it needs advice from the pharmacist

**What are the common side effects?**

- × Burning and stinging on instillation
- × Although topical it can be absorbed into the system and cause hypertension, nausea, dizziness, nervousness, insomnia and headache

**What drug interactions might there be?**

- × Although used topically it can be absorbed through the skin and thus possible to have drug interactions. If taking long-term medication check with pharmacist before using it.

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It is not ADEC category listed, but is considered safe to use for a very short period of time; 2-3 days only at the lowest dose possible. However, FESS is the safest and the treatment of choice.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

FESS is the medication of choice, but considers using it after the last feed for the shortest period of time and monitor the baby for any side effects.

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

If you have a cold or flu then you should be drinking plenty of water to recover more quickly. Although it appears safe to use with this medication it may delay your healing.

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ Increase the amount of water to help you recover quickly
- ✓ Consider using a steam vaporiser to help break down the mucus more quickly.
- ✓ Blow your nose frequently and monitor for any signs of fever.

**DOSAGE:**

1 spray up to three times a day for a maximum of 5 days in a row

**COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Drixine
- ✓ Logicin rapid relief
- ✓ Vicks Sinex
- ✓ Dimetapp 12 hour spray

**70. PANTOPRAZOLE**

### **What is it used for?**

This is a medication in the family of drugs called 'Proton Pump Inhibitors'. It is used to suppress the production of acid in the stomach thereby used to treat symptoms of reflux and stomach ulcers.

### **When should I be careful?**

- × If you have only started to get symptoms and they are becoming recurrent you must go to your doctor before treatment
- × If you have any liver disorders then you may need a lower dose as it may cause accumulation in the body
- × It should not be used if there are any allergies to omeprazole

### **What are the common side effects?**

They are generally well tolerated.

- × Headache
- × Nausea
- × Vomiting
- × Diarrhoea
- × Stomach pain
- × Constipation
- × Gas/wind
- × Itch/rash
- × Dizziness
- × Drowsiness
- × Reduced absorption if vitamin B12
- × Raised liver enzymes
- × Taste disturbances
- × Although rare, can cause hair loss and a type of anaemia.

### **What drug interactions might there be?**

- × There are SEVERAL interactions that can occur so it is vital that you tell the pharmacist when taking this medication, example: blood thinning medication

### **Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It is ADEC category B3, therefore it is best avoided. Ranitidine is preferred to be used if pregnant with severe heartburn symptoms. However calcium carbonate antacids are the safest and the medication of choice wherever possible.

### **Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

Although it appears that a small amount of medication passes through the milk, and it should only be used in caution on advice from your doctor. Antacids such as calcium carbonate are the medication of choice wherever possible.

### **Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

Alcohol increases acid secretion in the stomach so it will reduce how well the medication works. It is best to avoid it wherever possible.

### **What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ If you are having recurrent symptoms then you must see your doctor
- ✓ All lifestyle modifications on page --- should be followed wherever possible to minimise the need for medication
- ✓ Only a small quantity is available over-the-counter so it is only intended for short term use.

### **DOSAGE:**

Take 20 mg once daily

### **COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Somac 20mg

## **71. PARACETAMOL**

### **What is it used for?**

This is used to remove pain and fever.

### **When should I be careful?**

- × If you have any liver disease or disorder, then long term or excessive use of Paracetamol may worsen your condition
- ×

### **What are the common side effects?**

Side effects appear to be very rare with Paracetamol, unlike most other medications.

- × May get a rash or other allergic reactions if sensitive
- × May increase liver enzymes
- × Liver damage if used long term or excessively

**What drug interactions might there be?**

There is only one major interaction with WARFARIN; if you take the maximum dosage on a regular basis that it can affect your INR levels. Anyone taking Warfarin needs to check their levels regularly to see if there is a change.

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

Yes. It is ADEC category A and can be used on all trimesters at the lowest possible dose for the shortest possible time.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

Yes. It is the pain and fever medication of choice! It can be safely used at the lowest possible dose for the shortest possible time.

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

NO! UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD ALCOHOL BE CONSUMED WHILST TAKING THIS. IT CAN CAUSE SEVERE LIVER DAMAGE OFTEN IRREVERSIBLE.

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ It is advisable to take regularly every 4 to 6 hours so that pain and fever control is constant and you are not waiting for the next batch of tablets to start working
- ✓ If you have a heart condition or retain fluid or need to watch sodium content; be careful with soluble forms as they have high sodium levels
- ✓ Suppositories are effective when vomiting or nausea are present and work much more erratically or slower than oral
- ✓ 665mg is effective so you only need to take it every 6 to 8 hours, which is good for chronic pain. Maximum of 6 per day.
- ✓ Can be taken on an empty stomach
- ✓ Check all the medications that you take, as you can easily double up with Paracetamol (i.e. cold and flu tablets contain it, so do not dose separately with Paracetamol).
- ✓ Be careful of the strengths of products; especially liquids they may be different strengths; i.e. 50mg/mL vs. 100mg/mL....if in doubt use your calculator; never guess!

**DOSAGE:**

Paracetamol 500mg oral or rectal: take 1-2 tablets every 4 to 6 hours, with a maximum of 8 per day

Paracetamol 665mg: take 1-2 tablets every 6 to 8 hours, with a maximum of 6 per day

Liquid/rectal: 15mg/kg every 4 to 6 hours

**COMMON BRANDS:**

500mg strength:

- ✓ Panadol
- ✓ Panamax
- ✓ Febridol
- ✓ Paralgin
- ✓ Herron Paracetamol

665mg strength:

- ✓ Panadol Osteo

500mg combination with codeine:

- ✓ Panadeine
- ✓ Panadeine Extra
- ✓ Panamax Co
- ✓ Codalgin/Codapane

500mg combination with Metoclopramide:

- ✓ Anagrain
- ✓ Metomax

#### Liquid preparations:

- ✓ Children's Panadol 1 month-2 years
- ✓ Children's Panadol 1-5years
- ✓ Children's Panadol 5-12 years
- ✓ Panamax elixir or Panamax 240 elixir

#### Suppositories:

- ✓ Children's Panadol suppositories 6 months-5 years 125mg
- ✓ Children's Panadol suppositories 5-12 years 250mg
- ✓ Children's Panadol suppositories 10-12 and Adults: 500mg

## **72. PERMETHRIN**

### **What is it used for?**

This is used to treat head lice that are available in a lotion and shampoo form.

### **When should I be careful?**

- × It is not to be used if you are allergic to it
- × It cannot be used in children under 1 year
- × Lice can become resistant to this ingredient if used quite a lot
- × Do not use on broken or inflamed skin on the scalp

### **What are the common side effects?**

There are not a lot of side effects that have been reported;

- × Stinging
- × Irritation
- × Allergic contact dermatitis
- × Rash/itch
- × tingling

### **What drug interactions might there be?**

There does not appear to be any known or significant interactions

### **Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It is ADEC category B2, and is the preferred medicated product to use during pregnancy. Natural products may be safer to use.

### **Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

It is considered the safest to use whilst breastfeeding.

### **Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

It appears safe to use in moderation

### **What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ It is a good idea to wear gloves and wash hair thoroughly
- ✓ Allow the hair to dry naturally without the use of hair dryer

### **DOSAGE:**

Apply the lotion to damp hair after washing it and leave it on for 10 minutes before rinsing out with warm water and use a fine tooth comb to remove dead lice. Repeat after 7 days

### **COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Quellada Head Lice Treatment 1% lotion
- ✓ Pyrifoam Lice breaker 1% shampoo

## **73. PHENIRAMINE**

### **What is it used for?**

This is a sedating anti-histamine that can be used to reduce the symptoms of an allergic reaction; runny nose, sneezing, itchy and watery eyes, itchy skin. This particular one can also be used to treat symptoms of migraine; although it is unsure as to how effective it is.

### **When should I be careful?**

- × If you have glaucoma, you must be careful and inform the pharmacist before taking as it can increase the pressure in the eye. Therefore not recommended.
- × If you have urinary incontinence symptoms, then these sedating anti-histamines can worsen this and it can cause urge and frequency of urination
- × The drowsiness they cause can increase the risk of falls
- × The elderly population are more susceptible to the side effects and should only use the smallest possible dose for the shortest time
- × Care should be taken in kidney and liver disease as the dose may need to be adjusted.

### **What are the common side effects?**

- × Drowsiness that can last over to the next day
- × Dizziness
- × Ringing in the ears
- × Blurred vision
- × Incoordination
- × Anxiety
- × Tremor
- × *Nausea/vomiting (yet some antihistamines can help to prevent nausea and vomiting)*
- × Dry mouth
- × Cough
- × Urinary retention
- × Hallucinations
- × Can cause blood disorders (although rare)

### **What drug interactions might there be?**

There are SEVERAL interactions so you must check with the pharmacist first before taking Diphenhydramine. Some examples include;

- × Anti-depressants
- × Codeine; can cause additive drowsiness
- × Other anti-histamines
- × Various other prescription medication

### **Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It is ADEC category A, however as usual I only recommend it to be used ST and at the lowest possible dose and it must never be used in the last trimester if possible.

### **Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

It can pass through the milk supply in small amounts; so if it used it must be done so after your feed and for the shortest possible time at the lowest dose and monitor your child.

### **Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

NO WAY.

### **What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ Like all antihistamines, some people respond well to one type and not another so it is a bit of trial and error that occurs.
- ✓ Used at bedtime ideally
- ✓ You should stop the antihistamines at least 4 days before a skin-prick allergy test as it may affect the results.
- ✓ Not to be used in children under 5

### **DOSAGE:**

Adult and child over 10: half-one tablet two to three times daily

Child 5-10 years: half a tablet three times daily

### **COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Avil 45.3mg

## **74. PHENYLEPHRINE**

### **What is it used for?**

This is an oral decongestant that is used to treat blocked and stuffy noses associated with cold and flu symptoms.

### **When should I be careful?**

- × It should not be taken if you have high blood pressure as it will increase it
- × If you suffer from diabetes, it can increase blood glucose levels
- × If you have prostate hypertrophy it can increase symptoms
- × If you have an overactive thyroid then it can increase the heart related symptoms that occur.
- × If you have closed angle glaucoma then it can induce an acute attack
- × It should not be used if you have arrhythmia's as it can increase the chance of having one
- × Elderly people are at more of a risk from side effects

### **What are the common side effects?**

- × Increase blood pressure
- × Increased blood glucose levels
- × Nervousness
- × Irritability
- × Insomnia
- × Tremor
- × Palpitations
- × Increased heart rate
- × Arrhythmia
- × Hallucinations
- × Seizures

### **What drug interactions might there be?**

- × This can interact with SEVERAL medications so it is important to check with the pharmacist first before taking them.  
Some examples include;
- × Interacts with Blood pressure medication
- × Anti-depressants
- × Stimulants such as caffeine, guarana and weight-loss products
- × Other prescription medications

### **Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It is ADEC category B2 but should not be used especially in the first trimester

### **Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

It should not be used as it may cause side effects in the baby and there is a possibility that it may dry up the milk. Topical versions are safer than tablets i.e. Oxymetazoline, Xylometazoline or Tramazoline.

### **Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

When you have a severe cold or flu you need to remain adequately hydrated so that you can recover more quickly. Therefore it is best not to consume alcohol as it can delay your healing.

### **What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ Topical versions are considered more effective for a blocked nose but tablets are better in that they do not cause rebound congestion
- ✓ Do not take too close to bedtime (say last dose at 5pm) so that it does not keep you awake at night and interfere with sleep

### **DOSAGE:**

Take 10mg every 4 to 6 hours

### **COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Sudafed PE 10mg

## **75. PHOLCODINE**

### **What is it used for?**

This is a codeine type of cough suppressant for a dry and tickly non-productive cough. It has less side effects and less drug interactions than the other cough suppressant ingredients over-the-counter.

### **When should I be careful?**

- × If you suffer from asthma or any lung disorder you should not use a cough suppressant as it can mask the symptoms of worsening asthma symptoms and possibly make breathing harder.

- × If you have any liver disorders then you should be careful as a lower dose may be required
- × Elderly people are more likely to suffer from side effects, so they need to be monitored and possibly given the lowest dose for the shortest time
- × Cough suppressants are not to be used in children under 6 any longer
- × If you take anti-depressants you must check with the pharmacist first. Taking certain anti-depressants with this ingredient can cause a disorder called SERATONIN SYNDROME; which can cause chills, tremor, sweating and increased blood pressure.
- × Cough suppressants can cause drowsiness so care needs to be taken before driving

**What are the common side effects?**

- × Drowsiness
- × Constipation
- × Nausea and vomiting
- × Respiratory depression in those with underlying lung condition

**What drug interactions might there be?**

- × There are SEVERAL interactions as it is a codeine-based product. Check with the pharmacist first before using

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It is ADEC category A when used at the recommended dose for the shortest possible time.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

It may be used at the recommended dose and used after the last feed but since it lasts for 4 to 6 hours, monitor the baby for any side effects and stop immediately.

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

No you should not at all. It increases the effects of alcohol and cause exceptional drowsiness and possible impair your breathing.

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ Any cough suppressants should only be used for 48 hours; as any cough that lasts longer than this should be reviewed by your doctor
- ✓ If there is any tightness in the chest or wheezing then you must go to your doctor for an inhaler or something stronger from your doctor.
- ✓ It is a good idea to sip the mixture slowly as it will coat the throat and keep it lubricated and moist.
- ✓ It should be given 15-20 minutes before bed to assist with a cough through the night

**DOSAGE:**

**ADULTS:**

10-15mg three to four times a day

**CHILDREN OVER 6 YEARS:**

2.5mg-5mg three to four times a day

**COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Duro-Tuss Dry Cough Liquid Forte 3mg/mL
- ✓ Duro-Tuss Dry cough liquid regular 1mg/mL

**76. POLYETHYLENE GLYCOL LAXATIVES**

**What is it used for?**

This is a type of 'osmotic laxative' that draws water into the stools to help treat constipation.

**When should I be careful?**

- × It should not be used in any obstruction in the bowel
- × You should not use in heart failure as it can cause fluid and electrolyte imbalance
- × You are required to have adequate hydration in the body for it to be effective
- × If you have phenylketonuria; avoid Glycoprep C
- × Use with care if you have kidney disorders
- × If you are older then fluid and electrolyte disturbances can occur

**What are the common side effects?**

- × Nausea

- × Vomiting
- × Wind/gas
- × Stomach pain and cramps
- × Diarrhoea may occur if taking too much of it
- × Electrolyte imbalances may occur with long term or excessive doses

**What drug interactions might there be?**

There does not appear to be any known or significant interactions

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It does not have ADEC classification however it appears safe to use in pregnancy at the recommended dose.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

It appears safe to use in breastfeeding; monitor the baby for any side effects and stop if this occurs.

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

These require water to work well, so alcohol can dehydrate the system and cause it not to work as well as it should.

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ Remain hydrated and follow the constipation advice given on page ---
- ✓ These can be used to treat constipation as well as in preparation for testing

**COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Movicol, Movicol Half
- ✓ Glycoprep-C
- ✓ ColonLYTELY

**77. POLOXAMER**

**What is it used for?**

This is stool softener that is used to draw water into the stools to treat constipation.

**When should I be careful?**

- × You will need to drink plenty of water to help make the medication work well
- × You should not use it if you have any obstructions in the bowel

**What are the common side effects?**

- × Stomach cramps
- × Diarrhoea if you take too much
- × Nausea
- × Rash

**What drug interactions might there be?**

There does not appear to be any known or significant interactions with its use

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ It can take 2-3 days to work providing you drink water
- ✓ This is the product that can be used for small children from 1 month old up to 3 years
- ✓ You can mix the drops with the bottle or fruit juice
- ✓ Should only be used on a short term basis, if constipation lasts longer than 3-4 days go to the doctor
- ✓ Follow the constipation advice on page ---

**DOSAGE:**

Infant < 6 months: 10 drops three times day

Infant 6-18 months: 15 drops three times daily

Infant 18months-3 years: 25 drops three times daily

**COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Coloxyl Drops 10% oral liquid

**78. PROCHLORPERAZINE**

**What is it used for?**

This is used for nausea and vomiting and vertigo.

**When should I be careful?**

- x *It can cause drowsiness, so care needs to be taken if driving or going to work*
- x *It is not to be used in children under 12*
- x *Care needs to be taken if you suffer from arrhythmias as it can make it worse.*
- x *It can increase the risk of tremors*

**What are the common side effects?**

- x Drowsiness
- x Constipation
- x Dry mouth
- x Tremor
- x It can make Parkinson's disease symptoms worse
- x It can bring on Parkinson like side effects
- x Blurred vision
- x Dizziness
- x Arrhythmia's

**What drug interactions might there be?**

- x There are SEVERAL interactions possible with this medication that can be SEVERE, so it is vital to inform the pharmacist before taking it

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It is ADEC category C, so it is not recommended.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

It can pass through the milk and must only be used on doctor's advice. If you use it then monitor the breastfed baby for drowsiness and side effects. However, since it is not recommended for children less than 2 years then you should not do it.

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

No you cannot.

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

**DOSAGE:**

Take 1 to 2 tablets three times a day when required.

**COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Nausetil 5mg

**79. PROMETHAZINE**

**What is it used for?**

This is a sedating anti-histamine that can be used to reduce the symptoms of an allergic reaction; runny nose, sneezing, itchy and watery eyes, itchy skin. This particular one can also be used to treat symptoms of migraine; although it is unsure as to how effective it is.

**When should I be careful?**

- x If you have glaucoma, you must be careful and inform the pharmacist before taking as it can increase the pressure in the eye. Therefore not recommended.
- x If you have urinary incontinence symptoms, then these sedating anti-histamines can worsen this and it can cause urge and frequency of urination
- x The drowsiness they cause can increase the risk of falls
- x The elderly population are more susceptible to the side effects and should only use the smallest possible dose for the shortest time
- x Care should be taken in kidney and liver disease as the dose may need to be adjusted.

**What are the common side effects?**

- x Drowsiness that can last over to the next day
- x Dizziness
- x Ringing in the ears

- × Blurred vision
- × Incoordination
- × Anxiety
- × Tremor
- × *Nausea/vomiting (yet some antihistamines can help to prevent nausea and vomiting)*
- × Dry mouth
- × Cough
- × Urinary retention
- × Hallucinations
- × Can cause blood disorders (although rare)

**What drug interactions might there be?**

There are SEVERAL interactions so you must check with the pharmacist first before taking Diphenhydramine. Some examples include;

- × Anti-depressants
- × Codeine; can cause additive drowsiness
- × Other anti-histamines
- × Various other prescription medication

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It is ADEC category C, however it may be used in the first two trimesters if there is NO other option. It must never be used in the third trimester under any circumstances.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

It is unknown as to how much is passed through the milk supply; therefore it may only be used short term if necessary after your feed and it may stay in your system for up to 6 to 8 hours.

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

NO WAY.

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ Like all antihistamines, some people respond well to one type and not another so it is a bit of trial and error that occurs.
- ✓ Used at bedtime ideally
- ✓ You should stop the antihistamines at least 4 days before a skin-prick allergy test as it may affect the results.
- ✓ Not to be used in children under 2 years; although it is only available in a tablet form so I cannot see the practicality of it being used in children that can't swallow tablets.

**DOSAGE:**

Adults: 25-75mg at night or 10-25mg two to three times per day

Sedation: 25-75mg at night for short term use only

Child: over 2 years old only for allergies: 0.125mg/kg three times a day

Child over 6 : for allergies and cold symptoms or sedation: 0.5mg/kg at night or 0.125mg/kg three times per day.

**COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Phenergan 10mg (blue)
- ✓ Phenergan 25mg (green)
- ✓ Phenergan Elixer 1mg/mL

**80. PROPAMIDINE**

**What is it used for?**

This is an antibacterial medication used to treat mild bacterial conjunctivitis.

**When should I be careful?**

- × It should not be used in viral or allergic conjunctivitis or in severe bacterial cases as it may not be strong enough
- × Contact lenses cannot be worn whilst using this eye drop
- × If symptoms persist after using for 2 to 3 days then you should see your doctor

**What are the common side effects?**

- × Stinging

- × Burning after instillation of drops

**What drug interactions might there be?**

There does not appear to be any known or significant interactions

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It is not ADEC listed, however Chloramphenicol is ADEC category A so would be a more suitable option.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

There is insufficient data; although it is likely to be safe there is more data with Chloramphenicol and would be a more suitable option.

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

It appears to be safe to use.

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ It is only a mild antibacterial so should not be used in severe cases
- ✓ You must discard contents after 28 days of using the eye drops
- ✓ Wash your hands thoroughly before and after instilling the drops

**DOSAGE:**

Instil 1-2 drops four times a day

**COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Brolene

**81. PSEUDOEPHEDRINE**

**What is it used for?**

This is an oral decongestant that is used to treat blocked and stuffy noses associated with cold and flu symptoms.

**When should I be careful?**

- × It should not be taken if you have high blood pressure as it will increase it
- × If you suffer from diabetes, it can increase blood glucose levels
- × If you have prostate hypertrophy it can increase symptoms
- × If you have an overactive thyroid then it can increase the heart related symptoms that occur.
- × If you have closed angle glaucoma then it can induce an acute attack
- × It should not be used if you have arrhythmia's as it can increase the chance of having one
- × Elderly people are at more of a risk from side effects

**What are the common side effects?**

- × Increase blood pressure
- × Increased blood glucose levels
- × Nervousness
- × Irritability
- × Insomnia
- × Tremor
- × Palpitations
- × Increased heart rate
- × Arrhythmia
- × Hallucinations
- × Seizures

**What drug interactions might there be?**

- × This can interact with SEVERAL medications so it is important to check with the pharmacist first before taking them.  
Some examples include;
- × Interacts with Blood pressure medication
- × Anti-depressants
- × Stimulants such as caffeine, guarana and weight-loss products
- × Other prescription medications

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It is ADEC category B2 but should not be used especially in the first trimester

### **Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

It should not be used as it may cause side effects in the baby and there is a possibility that it may dry up the milk. Topical versions are safer than tablets i.e. Oxymetazoline, Xylometazoline or Tramazoline.

### **Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

When you have a severe cold or flu you need to remain adequately hydrated so that you can recover more quickly. Therefore it is best not to consume alcohol as it can delay your healing.

### **What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ Topical versions are considered more effective for a blocked nose but tablets are better in that they do not cause rebound congestion
- ✓ Do not take too close to bedtime (say last dose at 5pm) so that it does not keep you awake at night and interfere with sleep
- ✓ Pseudoephedrine has been renowned to be used in the black market; so by law you are required to present your driver's licence when you purchase it

### **DOSAGE:**

Take 60mg every 4 to 6 hours.

### **COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Sudafed 12 hour
- ✓ Sudafed nasal decongestant
- ✓ Telfast gold
- ✓ Claratyne D

## **82. PYRANTEL**

### **What is it used for?**

It is used to treat threadworm which is the most common type of worm infection in Australia.

### **When should I be careful?**

### **What are the common side effects?**

Side effects are not very common in the over-the-counter products available;

- × Headache
- × Nausea
- × Vomiting
- × Diarrhoea
- × Stomach pain
- × Hypersensitivity reactions; rash, itch
- × Although rare; dizziness, drowsiness.

### **What drug interactions might there be?**

There does not appear to be any known or significant interactions with this medication

### **Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It is ADEC category B2, and should not be used unless confirmed that you have worms and on doctor's advice.

### **Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

It is considered safe to feed if you have symptoms, but not if you are doing it as a routine. Take after the last feed.

### **Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

*It appears safe to use*

### **What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ It is best to take after food to avoid any of the side effects of the stomach
- ✓ You should treat everyone in the same household at the same time so that reinfestation can occur
- ✓ You should change the bedding and clean the toilets all the time
- ✓ You can re-treat if symptoms persist after 2 to 4 weeks

### **DOSAGE:**

This is suitable for use over the age of 12 months take with food.

**COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Combantin chocolate squares 100mg
- ✓ Combantin Oral liquid 50mg/mL
- ✓ Anthel 125mg and 250mg

**83. PYRETHRINS WITH PIPERONYL BUTOXIDE****What is it used for?**

This is used to treat head lice.

**When should I be careful?**

- × Do not use on broken or inflamed skin or weeping skin.

**What are the common side effects?**

- × Skin irritation may occur
- × Allergic reaction may occur too

**What drug interactions might there be?**

There does not appear to be any known or significant interactions

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It is ADEC category B3, and it recommended avoid using it.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

Although it is considered safe, Permethrin is still preferred.

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

It appears safe to use

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ Apply the aerosol in a well-ventilated room
- ✓ Do not use on eyelashes or eyebrows
- ✓ Try to use plain hair conditioner 3 times per week to suffocate the lice

**DOSAGE:****MOUSSE:**

Apply to dry hair and massage in until wet. Leave in for 10 minutes and then wash out. Use a fine tooth comb to remove dead lice. Repeat again in 7 days.

**AEROSOL SPRAY:**

Spray the medication into the hair and leave for 30 minutes and then rinse out. Use a fine tooth comb to remove dead lice.

**COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Paralice (0.66% pyrethrins and piperonyl butoxide 2.64%)
- ✓ Banlice (0.165% pyrethrins and piperonyl butoxide 1.65%)

**84. RABEPRAZOLE****What is it used for?**

This is a medication in the family of drugs called 'Proton Pump Inhibitors'. It is used to suppress the production of acid in the stomach thereby used to treat symptoms of reflux and stomach ulcers.

**When should I be careful?**

- × If you have only started to get symptoms and they are becoming recurrent you must go to your doctor before treatment
- × If you have any liver disorders then you may need a lower dose as it may cause accumulation in the body
- × It should not be used if there are any allergies to omeprazole

**What are the common side effects?**

They are generally well tolerated.

- × Headache
- × Nausea

- × Vomiting
- × Diarrhoea
- × Stomach pain
- × Constipation
- × Gas/wind
- × Itch/rash
- × Dizziness
- × Drowsiness
- × Reduced absorption if vitamin B12
- × Raised liver enzymes
- × Taste disturbances
- × Although rare, can cause hair loss and a type of anaemia.

**What drug interactions might there be?**

- × There are SEVERAL interactions that can occur so it is vital that you tell the pharmacist when taking this medication

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It is ADEC category B3, therefore it is best avoided. Ranitidine is preferred to be used if pregnant with severe heartburn symptoms. However calcium carbonate antacids are the safest and the medication of choice wherever possible.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

Although it appears that a small amount of medication passes through the milk, and it should only be used in caution on advice from your doctor. Antacids such as calcium carbonate are the medication of choice wherever possible.

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

Alcohol increases acid secretion in the stomach so it will reduce how well the medication works. It is best to avoid it wherever possible.

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ If you are having recurrent symptoms then you must see your doctor
- ✓ All lifestyle modifications on page --- should be followed wherever possible to minimise the need for medication
- ✓ Only a small quantity is available over-the-counter so it is only intended for short term use.

**DOSAGE:**

Take 10mg daily

**COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Pariet 10mg 7's or 14's

**85. RANITIDINE**

**What is it used for?**

This is a medication used to reduce acid production in the stomach and is used for symptoms of heartburn and reflux.

**When should I be careful?**

- × If you have any disorders of the kidney then you should be careful as the dose may be too high for you.

**What are the common side effects?**

These drugs are very well tolerated and side effects are not very common.

- × Headache
- × Tiredness
- × Dizziness
- × Confusion
- × Diarrhoea
- × rash

**What drug interactions might there be?**

- × There are SEVERAL interactions with prescription medication so it is vital that you tell the pharmacist what medications you take

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It is ADEC category B1 and is the safer option to Omeprazole, Pantoprazole and Rabeprazole. However, the calcium carbonate antacids are ADEC category A and are the preferred option.

### **Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

It appears to be safe to use for a short period of time and at the recommended dose. It should be taken preferably as a single dose at night after breastfeeding.

### **Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

Alcohol tends to increase gastric acid so will make the effectiveness of Ranitidine far less. Avoid drinking if you can.

### **What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ There is a 12 hour and 24 hour relief tablet that is available depending on how often you experience symptoms throughout the day. If it is only irregularly then choose the shorter acting tablet

### **DOSAGE:**

Take 150mg once or twice a day

Or

Take 300mg once a day

### **COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Zantac 12 hour relief
- ✓ Zantac 24 hour relief

## **86. SALBUTAMOL**

### **What is it used for?**

This is a relieving medication to help open up the airways when there is wheezing, tightening of the chest and difficulty breathing in those suffering from asthma.

### **When should I be careful?**

- × If you need to use Ventolin more than 3 times per week it is a sign that the asthma is getting worse or is not well controlled; and you must go to your doctor.
- × If you have high blood pressure it may increase the blood pressure; so monitor it.
- × If you have arrhythmia, heart failure or heart disease it may worsen symptoms so be aware
- × If you have diabetes, taking high doses of Salbutamol can increase the blood sugar levels
- × If you have an overactive thyroid, you are more likely to have heart related side effects
- × If you are taking other stimulants then you are more likely to experience heart related side effects

### **What are the common side effects?**

- × Tremor
- × Palpitations
- × Headache
- × High blood glucose levels
- × Fast heart rate
- × Muscle cramps
- × Agitation
- × Hyperactivity in children
- × insomnia

### **What drug interactions might there be?**

- × If used with stimulants such as Phenylephrine, Pseudoephedrine, Guarana or caffeine it can increase heart rate, blood pressure and cause palpitations
- × Certain blood pressure medication; high doses can increase potassium levels which can affect the rhythm of the heart
- × Diabetic medications; high doses can increase blood sugar levels
- × You should tell your doctor that you use Salbutamol so they can ensure medication they prescribe to you is safe to use

### **Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It is ADEC category A and is safe to use. If you need it more often then you should go to your Dr to have asthma under control so that the mother is receiving adequate oxygen levels.

### **Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

Yes you can; however if you are using more and more frequently then watch the child for side effects and consider going to the doctor to have your asthma assessed and well controlled.

### **Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

In an acute situation, you should not be taking alcohol as it can depress or suppress your breathing and worsen symptoms. But if it is used occasionally then it appears to be ok.

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ It should work in 5-15 minutes but only lasts for 3 to 6 hours
- ✓ The inhaler requires a good hand-breath co-ordination so if the patient is older or young then use a spacer
- ✓ **SPACERS:** this requires less co-ordination and you can breathe normally they are good for children under 5 years and use a face mask for kids under 4. Large volume spacers are more efficient than small volume spacers but less convenient to carry but not suitable for kids under 5 due to their insufficient tidal volumes. You should wash the spacer before first use and then once a month: wash in warm water with detergent but do not rinse it just allow it to air dry on a cloth.

**DOSAGE:**

Give 1-2 inhalations every 4 to 6 hours.

\*Shake the inhaler first, then breathe out and hold mouth around the mouthpiece firmly then put a proper seal around the mouth piece the inhale.

**In an asthma attack:**

4 puffs then repeat in 4 minutes if no improvement. Call ambulance and continue to give 4 puffs every 4 minutes until ambulance arrives.

**COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Ventolin
- ✓ Asmol
- ✓ Apo-Salbutamol

**87. SALICYLIC ACID**

**What is it used for?**

This is used to help break down thickened skin cells and it has mild antibacterial and antifungal actions. It can be used for psoriasis, dandruff, dermatitis and acne.

**When should I be careful?**

- × If you are allergic to salicylic acid or any aspirin type product you should not use it
- × If you are diabetic then you have poorer wound healing abilities, so using this product can cause ulceration to occur which can be very dangerous.
- × Do not use it on broken, open, inflamed or weeping skin at all.
- × Do not use it near your eyes, inside your nose or mouth at all.
- × It can be very drying, so do not use it if you have exceptionally dry skin.
- × You should not apply it to intertriginous areas as it can lead to increased absorption which can cause salicylate toxicity (confusion, dizziness, headaches, rapid breathing and tinnitus)
- × You should not apply any dressings or cover it up as it can increase its absorption and the risk of salicylate absorption.

**What are the common side effects?**

- × Irritation to the skin
- × Redness
- × Ulceration of the skin

**What drug interactions might there be?**

- × It can interact with Warfarin. If taking then you need to monitor your INR to ensure that it is not changing too much

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It is not recommended at all during the third trimester. There is lacking data about its safety; so use only as a last resort and should only be used on a small area for the shortest possible time.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

It should be used with caution and used only as a last resort on small areas and for the smallest possible time.

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

It appears to be safe to use

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ Wash hands immediately before and after application
- ✓ Concentrations of 2-6% are used for dandruff, dermatitis, psoriasis and acne
- ✓ Concentrations of up to 70% can be used on severe warts, corns and calluses.
- ✓ Do not use dressings or coverings and try to use on the smallest area
- ✓ Use a gentle and non-perfumed moisturiser if possible

**DOSAGE:**

Cream: psoriasis, eczema, dermatitis

Apply to the affected area three times a day

Shampoo:

Apply to wet hair and massage in for 3-5 minutes twice a week.

Liquid/gel: to warts, corns, calluses

Apply once or twice a day

**COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ David Craig salicylic acid in aqueous cream 2,3, or 5 %
- ✓ Psor-Assist scalp lotion
- ✓ Egozite cradle cap lotion
- ✓ Ionil
- ✓ Duo film gel
- ✓ Corn kill
- ✓ Dermatech wart solution

**88. SENNA**

**What is it used for?**

This is a stimulant laxative that is used to treat constipation on a short term basis only.

**When should I be careful?**

- × It can be habit forming so should ONLY be used short term (say 1 to 3 days consecutively to get the system back into a rhythm and then stop)
- × It is not to be used if there is any bowel obstruction unless on doctor's advice
- × It should not be used if there is any underlying inflammatory stomach or bowel conditions.
- × Be careful in the elderly population, as it may produce a violent effect and cause faecal incontinence which can be messy and embarrassing.

**What are the common side effects?**

- × It can cause diarrhoea or a violent effect which can be unpredictable
- × Can cause fluid and electrolyte loss if used excessively or long term which can cause dehydration
- × Cramps and stomach pains
- × Nausea
- × It may discolour urine to make it yellowish brown or red

**What drug interactions might there be?**

There does not appear to be any known or significant interactions

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It is considered ADEC category A, but I normally do not recommend its use as it is a stimulant and its effects can be sudden and violent in nature. Use only for the SHORTEST time and at the lowest dose.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

It appears to be safe at the recommended dose. Monitor signs of the baby for any diarrhoea as indication to stop taking it.

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

It may cause dehydration if a violent effect is seen. I would advise to avoid it.

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ It can take 6-12 hours to see an effect if taking tablets

**DOSAGE:**

ADULTS:

7.5mg-30mg at bedtime

**CHILDREN:**

2-6 years: 3.75mg-7.5mg at bedtime

6-12 years: 7.5-15mg at bedtime

**COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Sennetabs 7.5mg
- ✓ Senokot 7.5mg
- ✓ Laxettes with Senna 12mg
- ✓ Laxettes with Sennosides 12mg

**89. SILVER SULFADIAZINE**

**What is it used for?**

This is an antibacterial that can be used to prevent infection in burns, leg ulcers and pressure sores.

**When should I be careful?**

- × It cannot be used in allergies to sulphonamides
- × If you have kidney disorders then you should use with care.
- × It should not be used in children younger than 4 weeks old

**What are the common side effects?**

- × Burning
- × Itch
- × Rash
- × Skin discolouration
- × Hypersensitivity reactions

**What drug interactions might there be?**

- × Although it is used topically it can be absorbed through the skin and interact with certain medications; examples;
- × Hiprex
- × Some epileptic medication

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It is ADEC category C and must not be used in the last month of pregnancy due to possible risks in the baby but may be used in caution in the first two trimesters.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

Care should be taken when used; only use small amounts for a short time and if essential.

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

If you have been burnt then you should not consume alcohol as it is dehydrating and burns already increase the risk of dehydration.

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ Long term use can delay the healing of wounds; so it should only be used to prevent infection for the first 3 days after being burned

**DOSAGE:**

Apply 3-5 mm layer thick cream twice daily

**COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Flamazine
- ✓ Flamigel
- ✓ Flaminal hydro

**90. SORBITOL**

**What is it used for?**

This is a type of 'osmotic laxative' that draws water into the stools to help treat constipation.

**When should I be careful?**

- × It should not be used in any obstruction in the bowel
- × You should not use it if you have fructose intolerance
- × You are required to have adequate hydration in the body for it to be effective

**What are the common side effects?**

- × Wind/gas
- × Stomach pain and cramps
- × Diarrhoea may occur if taking too much of it
- × Electrolyte imbalances may occur with long term or excessive doses

**What drug interactions might there be?**

There does not appear to be any known or significant interactions

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It does not have ADEC classification however it appears safe to use in pregnancy at the recommended dose.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

It appears safe to use in breastfeeding; monitor the baby for any side effects and stop if this occurs.

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

Sorbitol requires water to work well, so alcohol can dehydrate the system and cause it not to work as well as it should.

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ Remain hydrated and follow the constipation advice given on page ---
- ✓ It is a very sweet liquid so it may be easier to mix with water, fruit juice or milk
- ✓ It works within 1 to 3 days

**DOSAGE:**

Adults: 20 mL once daily and increase to 20 mL three times a day if necessary.

**COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Sorbilax 70% liquid

**91. TERBINAFINE**

**What is it used for?**

This is an anti-fungal agent to treat fungal infections of the skin. It is considered very effective and only needs to be used once daily making compliance easier.

**When should I be careful?**

- × If you have any disorders of the liver

**What are the common side effects?**

It is well tolerated and not many side effects have been seen.

- × Redness
- × Itch
- × stinging

**What drug interactions might there be?**

- × Although used topically, there are a number of side effects when used in the tablet form so there is potential of interactions occurring. Check with your pharmacist if you are taking long term medications

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It is ADEC category B1, although safe Clotrimazole is preferred as it is ADEC category A.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

Data is lacking, but appears to be safe to use.

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

Topical use is ok to consume alcohol.

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ It has a more rapid onset of action which allows a shorter duration of action
- ✓ Review the diagnosis if there is no improvement after 1-2 weeks
- ✓ The cream stays on longer but the dermgel is good for hairy areas
- ✓ The spray is good if you don't want to touch the area
- ✓ The once off solution is easy to use: apply it and do not wash off for 24 hours
- ✓ Do not use any dressings or bandages

**DOSAGE:**

Apply to the affected area once up to twice a day until symptoms resolve and then for 2 weeks thereafter. It should not exceed more than 4 weeks

**COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Lamisil cream
- ✓ Lamisil Dermgel
- ✓ Lamisil once daily spray
- ✓ Lamisil once off solution
- ✓ Tamsil

**92. TERBUTALINE**

**What is it used for?**

This is a relieving medication to help open up the airways when there is wheezing, tightening of the chest and difficulty breathing in those suffering from asthma.

**When should I be careful?**

- × If you need to use Bricanyl more than 3 times per week it is a sign that the asthma is getting worse or is not well controlled; and you must go to your doctor.
- × If you have high blood pressure it may increase the blood pressure; so monitor it.
- × If you have arrhythmia, heart failure or heart disease it may worsen symptoms so be aware
- × If you have diabetes, taking high doses of Salbutamol can increase the blood sugar levels
- × If you have an overactive thyroid, you are more likely to have heart related side effects
- × If you are taking other stimulants then you are more likely to experience heart related side effects

**What are the common side effects?**

- × Tremor
- × Palpitations
- × Headache
- × High blood glucose levels
- × Fast heart rate
- × Muscle cramps
- × Agitation
- × Hyperactivity in children
- × insomnia

**What drug interactions might there be?**

- × If used with stimulants such as Phenylephrine, Pseudoephedrine, Guarana or caffeine it can increase heart rate, blood pressure and cause palpitations
- × Certain blood pressure medication; high doses can increase potassium levels which can affect the rhythm of the heart
- × Diabetic medications; high doses can increase blood sugar levels
- × You should tell your doctor that you use Salbutamol so they can ensure medication they prescribe to you is safe to use

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It is ADEC category A and is safe to use. If you need it more often then you should go to your Dr to have asthmas under control so that the mother is receiving adequate oxygen levels.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

It is safe to use. If you are using a lot of it, then monitor the baby for signs of a high dose.

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

In an acute situation you should not take alcohol as it can depress and suppress your breathing. If you occasionally use it then 1glass may be ok.

**\*What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ It should work in 5-15 minutes but only lasts for 3 to 6 hours
- ✓ Dry powder inhalers are breath activated and require less hand-breath co-ordination than MDI's. They do require a deeper breath for it to work well and may not be as effective if having an attack or are elderly. Suitable for kids over 8 years.

**DOSAGE:**

1 puff as required every 4 to 6 hours

\*This is a dry powder inhaler and it is used differently to an aerosol like Ventolin and you cannot use a spacer with it.

Put the device flat on a counter and then twist it once to the left as far as it goes and then once to the right until it clicks and pierces the dose. And then breathe out and seal the mouth around the mouthpiece and take a deep breath and hold.

**COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Bricanyl Turbuhaler 500micrograms

**93. TETRAHYDRAZOLINE**

**What is it used for?**

This is used to constrict the blood vessels in the eye to reduce redness and possible discomfort.

**When should I be careful?**

- × These should only be used short term, up to 5 days as it can cause rebound redness i.e. your eyes become used to the medication and remain red
- × You must not use this if you have any serious eye disorders as it may increase the pressure within the eye
- × You should see your doctor if there is still redness after 48 hours of using them
- × You must discard contents after 28 days of opening it as you may get an eye infection
- × You should not wear contact lenses whilst using this drop. Remove the lens and wait 15 minutes after putting the drops in before putting the lenses back into your eye.

**What are the common side effects?**

- × Rebound redness occurs when you use for longer than 5 days in a row
- × Stinging on instillation
- × Blurred vision
- × Changes in eye pressure

**What drug interactions might there be?**

- × Although it is used topically since it can still be absorbed through the eye into the blood stream and is a stimulant it can still interact with medication. It is best to check with the pharmacist first before using this

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It is not listed with an ADEC category, it should only be used for a couple of days if there is no other option to use. If you can avoid it, it is the safest option.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

It is unknown whether Naphazoline enters breast milk. Consider the use of it short term and hold the tear ducts for 3 minutes to reduce systemic absorption and monitor the baby for any side effects.

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

It appears safe to use.

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

- × Once you have put in the drop, close your eye gently and press the inner corner of your eye where your tear duct is and press for at least 3 minutes. This will reduce how much of the medication is absorbed into the blood stream.
- × If you need to instil another drop wait 5 minutes before putting in the second drop.
- × Try and ascertain the cause of the redness so you can correct this rather than keep using the drops. i.e. if it is caused by dry eye then consider using a lubricant eye drop instead, minimise smoke and stay away from air-conditioning and wind.

**DOSAGE:**

Instil 1 drop every 6 to 12 hours as required.

**COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Murine Sore Eyes
- ✓ Visine Advanced Relief
- ✓ Visine Original

#### 94. TOLNAFTATE

##### What is it used for?

This is an antifungal agent that is used for fungal skin infections.

##### When should I be careful?

- × It is not to be used for infections on the nails or hair follicle

##### What are the common side effects?

- × Stinging
- × Irritation may occur

##### What drug interactions might there be?

There does not appear to be any known or significant interactions

##### Can I use if I am pregnant?

It does not have an ADEC category although it does appear to be safe to use. Although Clotrimazole is the treatment of choice as it is ADEC category A.

##### Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?

It appears safe to use, although Clotrimazole is the medication of choice,

##### Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?

It appears to be safe to use

##### What other bits of information can you give me?

- ✓ It is also available in a powder form which can be beneficial to help dry moist areas and assist in treating the infection

##### DOSAGE:

###### CREAM:

Apply to the affected area twice daily until symptoms resolve plus for 2 weeks thereafter

###### LIQUID:

1-2 drops twice daily

###### POWDER/SPRAYS:

Sprinkle a sufficient amount to cover the area twice daily

##### COMMON BRANDS:

- ✓ Tinaderm cream and powder and liquid
- ✓ Mycil cream, powder
- ✓ Ringworm ointment

#### 95. TRAMAZOLINE

##### What is it used for?

This is a topical decongestant that is used to reduce a blocked and stuffy nose.

##### When should I be careful?

- × It should not be used for longer than 5 days in a row as it can cause rebound congestion
- × Although topical, there are certain antidepressants that cannot be taken whilst using this as it can cause an increase in blood pressure which can be dangerous.
- × It is not to be used when the nose is bleeding
- × It is not to be used if there are any signs of infection; coloured mucus or fever
- × It is not to be used in children under 6 years of age and between 6-11 it needs advice from the pharmacist

##### What are the common side effects?

- × Burning and stinging on instillation

- × Although topical it can be absorbed into the system and cause hypertension, nausea, dizziness, nervousness, insomnia and headache

**What drug interactions might there be?**

- × Although used topically it is still possible to be absorbed through the eyes into the blood stream and since it is a stimulant it may interact with certain medications. Ask your pharmacist if you are taking long-term medications

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It is not ADEC category listed, but is considered safe to use for a very short period of time; 2-3 days only at the lowest dose possible. However, FESS is the safest and the treatment of choice.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

FESS is the medication of choice, but consider using it after the last feed for the shortest period of time and monitor the baby for any side effects.

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

If you have a cold or flu then you should be drinking plenty of water to recover more quickly. Although it appears safe to use with this medication it may delay your healing.

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ Increase the amount of water to help you recover quickly
- ✓ Consider using a steam vaporiser to help break down the mucus more quickly.
- ✓ Blow your nose frequently and monitor for any signs of fever.
- ✓ Only to be used in children over 6 years of age now on pharmacists' recommendation

**DOSAGE:**

1-2 sprays up to three times a day for a maximum of 5 days in a row

**COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Spray-Tish
- ✓ Spray-Tish Menthol

**96. TRILOPIDINE**

**What is it used for?**

This is a sedating anti-histamine that can be used to reduce the symptoms of an allergic reaction; runny nose, sneezing, itchy and watery eyes, itchy skin. This particular one can also be used to treat symptoms of migraine; although it is unsure as to how effective it is.

**When should I be careful?**

- × If you have glaucoma, you must be careful and inform the pharmacist before taking as it can increase the pressure in the eye. Therefore not recommended.
- × If you have urinary incontinence symptoms, then these sedating anti-histamines can worsen this and it can cause urge and frequency of urination
- × The drowsiness they cause can increase the risk of falls
- × The elderly population are more susceptible to the side effects and should only use the smallest possible dose for the shortest time
- × Care should be taken in kidney and liver disease as the dose may need to be adjusted.

**What are the common side effects?**

- × The drowsiness can carry over to the next day
- × It can be habit forming meaning that you may have trouble sleeping without it
- × Drowsiness that can last over to the next day
- × Dizziness
- × Ringing in the ears
- × Blurred vision
- × Incoordination
- × Anxiety
- × Tremor
- × *Nausea/vomiting (yet some antihistamines can help to prevent nausea and vomiting)*
- × Dry mouth
- × Cough
- × Urinary retention

- × Hallucinations
- × Can cause blood disorders (although rare)

**What drug interactions might there be?**

There are SEVERAL interactions so you must check with the pharmacist first before taking Diphenhydramine. Some examples include;

- × Anti-depressants
- × Codeine; can cause additive drowsiness
- × Other anti-histamines
- × Various other prescription medication

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It is ADEC category A, however as usual I only recommend it to be used ST and at the lowest possible dose. I would recommend not using it in the last trimester so that it does not cause respiratory depression in your child.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

It may be used in breastfeeding only for short term and after the last feed. If any drowsiness or adverse effects occur in the baby, stop immediately.

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

NO WAY

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ Like all antihistamines, some people respond well to one type and not another so it is a bit of trial and error that occurs.
- ✓ Used at bedtime ideally
- ✓ You should stop the antihistamines at least 4 days before a skin-prick allergy test as it may affect the results.
- ✓ Not to be used in children under 2 years; although it is only available in a tablet form so I cannot see the practicality of it being used in children that can't swallow tablets.
- ✓ It is habit forming so should only be used for say 3 days in a week and then stop

**DOSAGE:**

**COMMON BRANDS:**

**97. TRIMEPRAZINE**

**What is it used for?**

This is a sedating anti-histamine that can be used to reduce the symptoms of an allergic reaction; runny nose, sneezing, itchy and watery eyes, itchy skin. This particular one can also be used to treat symptoms of migraine; although it is unsure as to how effective it is.

**When should I be careful?**

- × If you have glaucoma, you must be careful and inform the pharmacist before taking as it can increase the pressure in the eye. Therefore not recommended.
- × If you have urinary incontinence symptoms, then these sedating anti-histamines can worsen this and it can cause urge and frequency of urination
- × The drowsiness they cause can increase the risk of falls
- × The elderly population are more susceptible to the side effects and should only use the smallest possible dose for the shortest time
- × Care should be taken in kidney and liver disease as the dose may need to be adjusted.

**What are the common side effects?**

- × Drowsiness that can last over to the next day
- × Dizziness
- × Ringing in the ears
- × Blurred vision
- × Incoordination
- × Anxiety

- × Tremor
- × *Nausea/vomiting (yet some antihistamines can help to prevent nausea and vomiting)*
- × Dry mouth
- × Cough
- × Urinary retention
- × Hallucinations
- × Can cause blood disorders (although rare)

**What drug interactions might there be?**

There are SEVERAL interactions so you must check with the pharmacist first before taking Diphenhydramine. Some examples include;

- × Anti-depressants
- × Codeine; can cause additive drowsiness
- × Other anti-histamines
- × Various other prescription medication

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It is ADEC category C, therefore it is not recommended to be used.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

It is unknown whether it can pass through the milk; therefore it is recommended to avoid use unless there is no other option. If chosen to be used then take after the last feed and monitor the child. It may reduce the milk supply.

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

NO WAY.

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ Like all antihistamines, some people respond well to one type and not another so it is a bit of trial and error that occurs.
- ✓ Used at bedtime ideally
- ✓ You should stop the antihistamines at least 4 days before a skin-prick allergy test as it may affect the results.
- ✓ Not to be used in children under 2 years

**DOSAGE:**

Adults: 10mg three to four times a day

Children over the age of 2: can only be used for allergies 0.1-0.25mg/kg four times a day

Children over the age of 6: can be used for colds, sedation and allergies: 1-2mg/kg at night or 0.1-0.25mg/kg four times a day

**COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Vallergran 1.5mg/mL

**98. VITAMIN B12**

**What is it used for?**

This is a necessary vitamin for normal blood cell functioning that should only be supplemented if you are deficient.

**When should I be careful?**

- × You need to make sure that you are B12 deficient before supplementing it
- × You need to have regular blood tests every year

**What are the common side effects?**

They are very rare, however at extremely high doses;

- × High potassium levels that can affect the rhythm of the heart

**What drug interactions might there be?**

There does not appear to be any known or significant interactions

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It is safe to use if you are B12 deficient.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

It is safe to use, and should be given to women who are completely vegetarian.

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

It appears safe to use

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

**DOSAGE:**

Take 1 100mcg tablet daily

Injections need to be done by doctor

**COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Blackmore's Vitamin B12 100mcg
- ✓ Nature's Own Vitamin B12 100mcg

**99. WARFARIN**

**When should I be careful?**

- × There is a huge risk of bleeding, so do not take any anti-inflammatories whilst taking warfarin unless on doctor's advice
- × If you are undergoing surgery check with your doctors when you should stop taking it prior; at least 4 to 5 days but you will need to have a replacement product

**What drug interactions might there be?**

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

You must never have more than 1-2 standard drinks per day and have two alcohol free days per week. Do not binge drink as it will affect your whole system.

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ Take the tablets at the same time each day
- ✓ You need to have a balanced diet and lifestyle; as you do not want to binge eat or drink as this can affect the amount of vitamin K and affect the effectiveness of this medication
- ✓ Tell your doctor, pharmacist that you are taking warfarin so they can check with every single new medication that it will be ok
- ✓ Tell your dentist, podiatrist, physio or chiro that you take warfarin
- ✓ You will need regular blood tests with this medication
- ✓ Tell your doctor immediately if you are experiencing diarrhoea, vomiting, infection or fever. As well as any bruising, bleeding, dark or red or pink urine or red or black faeces.
- ✓ You should not change brands of warfarin; stick to the same brand all the time.
- ✓ Consider the use of a medic alert bracelet or necklace
- ✓ Even if you start any medication tell the pharmacist; even multivitamins can affect warfarin
- ✓ Any bleeding and bruising can be an issue and a sign of too much warfarin in the system

**COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Coumadin 1mg, 2mg and 5 mg
- ✓ Marevan 1mg, 3mg and 5 mg

**100. XYLOMETAZOLINE**

**What is it used for?**

This is a topical decongestant that is used to reduce a blocked and stuffy nose.

**When should I be careful?**

- × It should not be used for longer than 5 days in a row as it can cause rebound congestion
- × Although topical, there are certain antidepressants that cannot be taken whilst using this as it can cause an increase in blood pressure which can be dangerous.
- × It is not to be used when the nose is bleeding
- × It is not to be used if there are any signs of infection; coloured mucus or fever

- × It is not to be used in children under 6 years of age and between 6-11 it needs advice from the pharmacist

**What are the common side effects?**

- × Burning and stinging on instillation
- × Although topical it can be absorbed into the system and cause hypertension, nausea, dizziness, nervousness, insomnia and headache

**What drug interactions might there be?**

There are SEVERAL interactions so you must check with the pharmacist first before taking Diphenhydramine. Some examples include;

- × Anti-depressants
- × Codeine; can cause additive drowsiness
- × Other anti-histamines
- × Various other prescription medication

**Can I use if I am pregnant?**

It is not ADEC category listed, but is considered safe to use for a very short period of time; 2-3 days only at the lowest dose possible. However, FESS is the safest and the treatment of choice.

**Can I use whilst I am breast feeding?**

FESS is the medication of choice, but consider using it after the last feed for the shortest period of time and monitors the baby for any side effects.

**Can I have alcohol whilst taking this medication?**

If you have a cold or flu then you should be drinking plenty of water to recover more quickly. Although it appears safe to use with this medication it may delay your healing.

**What other bits of information can you give me?**

- ✓ Increase the amount of water to help you recover quickly
- ✓ Consider using a steam vaporiser to help break down the mucus more quickly.
- ✓ Blow your nose frequently and monitor for any signs of fever.

**DOSAGE:**

1 spray up to three times a day for a maximum of 5 days in a row

**COMMON BRANDS:**

- ✓ Otrivin
- ✓ Otrivin with Menthol

- ❖ Websites for further information and **INDEX**