

## About your medicine

Your doctor has prescribed the following penicillin for you:

- Amoxicillin
- Amoxicillin with clavulanic acid
- Cloxacillin
- Penicillin

## What is this medicine used for?

Penicillins are antibiotics that are used to treat and prevent a wide variety of bacterial infections. It works by stopping the growth of bacteria.

## How should I take this medicine?

Take this medication with or without food. However, penicillins (except amoxicillin, amoxicillin with clavulanic acid) are best absorbed when taken on an empty stomach (1 hour before or 2 hours after meals).

The dosage is based on your medical condition and response to therapy. Antibiotics work best when the amount of medicine in your body is kept at a constant level. Therefore, take this drug at evenly spaced intervals.

Continue to take this medication until the full-prescribed amount is finished, even if symptoms disappear after a few days. Stopping the medication too early may allow bacteria to continue to grow, which may result in a relapse of the infection.

## What should I do if I forget a dose?

If you miss a dose of this medicine, take it as soon as possible. However, if it is almost time for your next dose, skip the missed dose and go back to your regular dosing schedule.

Do not double the next dose to make up for the missed dose.

## What possible side effects may it cause?

Certain side effects of this medicine are not unusual and may even disappear during treatment. If any of the following effects persist or are severe, consult your doctor.

- diarrhoea
- mouth sores
- nausea, vomiting
- upset stomach

Although uncommon, you may develop a black, "hairy" tongue while taking penicillin. This effect is harmless and usually goes away after treatment. Maintain good oral hygiene, and brush your tongue with a soft toothbrush twice a day.

Consult your doctor as soon as possible if any of these additional effects occur, as they may indicate more serious side effects:

- allergic reaction (difficulty breathing, severe dizziness, rash, itching, swelling)
- vaginal itching or discharge
- white spots on lips or in mouth

This medication may rarely cause a severe intestinal condition (pseudomembranous colitis) due to a resistant bacteria. This condition may occur during treatment or weeks after treatment has stopped. Do not use anti-diarrhea products or narcotic pain medications if you have the following symptoms because these products may make them worse. Tell your doctor immediately if you develop: persistent diarrhoea, abdominal or stomach pain/cramping, blood/mucus in your stool.

## What precautions should I take?

- Inform your doctor if you have kidney problems, if you are allergic to penicillins or to cephalosporins (e.g., cephalexin, cefuroxime) or if you have any other allergies.
- *For women: Tell your doctor if you are pregnant, plan to become pregnant, or are breast-feeding.* This medication should be used only when clearly needed during pregnancy.
- Inform your doctor if you are taking other medication, especially, live bacterial vaccines, methotrexate, tetracyclines.
- Before taking penicillin, tell your doctor or pharmacist if you are also taking probenecid. Probenecid slows down the removal of penicillin from your body, resulting in higher levels of this antibiotic in your bloodstream. For certain types of difficult-to-treat infections, your doctor may prescribe these 2 medications together in order to achieve this effect.
- This medication may decrease the effectiveness of combination-type birth control pills. This can result in pregnancy. You may need to use an additional form of reliable birth control while using this medication.

- Do not allow anyone else to take this medication.

#### **How do I store this medicine?**

- Follow the instructions on the label about the expiry date, and on the need for refrigeration of the oral liquid form of the medicine. Do not freeze. Discard any unused portion after the duration as stated on the label.
- Keep this medicine away from heat and direct sunlight in a cool, dry place, out of reach of children.
- Do not keep this medicine with other medications in the same container. Keep each medicine separately in labeled containers.

*When in doubt, consult your doctor or pharmacist.*

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## **PATIENT INFORMATION LEAFLET**

# **ORAL PENICILLINS**

