

CALCIUM CARBONATE

Other names: Calci-tab 500®, Calci-tab 600l®,
Calci-tab effervescentl®, Caltrate®, Calcium-Sandoz®



Important note: The following information is intended to add to, not replace, the knowledge and judgment of your doctor, pharmacist or other health care professional.

Why you are taking calcium

Calcium is a mineral found naturally in foods such as milk, cheeses, yoghurt, sardines and some vegetables and fruit. Calcium is necessary for many body functions, especially for the formation and maintenance of bones and for maintaining healthy muscles, heart and nervous system.

Calcium can be taken as a dietary supplement in certain conditions such as in dialysis patients as a “phosphate binder” and to help strengthen the bones in osteoporosis.

How does calcium work

In kidney failure, phosphate accumulates because the kidneys can't process it properly, causing high levels in the blood. Taking calcium with your meals, helps prevent phosphate from being absorbed into your body from your food, which results in a lower blood phosphate level. However, because dialysis does not lower the blood's phosphate level and diet is difficult to control, calcium is required to be taken on a regular basis. Also, dialysis patients often have a low blood calcium level and this is countered by supplementing with calcium.

In osteoporosis, bone becomes less dense and/or the strength of the bone is lost. Since bone is formed from calcium, taking a supplement of calcium will slow down this rate of loss.

When to take this medicine

Calcium tablets should be taken on a **regular** basis at **meal times**, with a full glass of water. They should not be crushed or chewed. The effervescent tablet or Calcium-Sandoz tablets are dissolved in a glass of water and usually taken once a day.

If you miss a dose

Take as soon as possible except when it is close to the time for your next dose. If it is almost time for next dose, skip the missed dose and return to your regular dosing schedule. You should not take two doses at the same time.

Side Effects

Unfortunately as well as having good effects, most medicines have some effects on your body that are unwanted. These are called *side effects*.

Call your doctor **immediately** if you have any of these side effects:

- anorexia (a lack or loss of appetite for food)
- nausea and vomiting
- stomach pain
- muscle weakness
- difficult or painful urination
- confusion

Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you have these side effects:

- constipation
- diarrhoea
- upset stomach
- headache

Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you notice any other side effect(s) from your medicine that are not mentioned here.

Other Medication

Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you are taking any other medicine including herbal or complementary products and medicines you can buy without a prescription.

Calcium carbonate may interfere with the absorption of other medicines and should be taken at a different time (at least 2 hours before or 2 hours after), for example, it can interfere with the following:

- some antibiotic (ciprofloxacin, doxycycline)
- beta-blocker (celiprolol)
- bisphosphonates (alendronate, etidronate)
- iron (ferrous sulphate)
- levothyroxine
- zinc (zinc sulphate)

Storage

Keep all medicines out of the reach of children.

Read this leaflet and discuss any questions you have about your medicines with your doctor or pharmacist.