

DOXYCYCLINE

Other names: Doxy-50®, Doxine®



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.

How does doxycycline work?

Doxycycline is a tetracycline antibiotic. These medicines work by killing or stopping the growth of bacteria which can cause infection. Antibiotics will not work for colds, flu, or other viral infections.

Why you are taking this medicine?

Doxycycline is used to treat infections of the:

- Chest
- Urethra
- vaginal
- Rectum
- Skin and severe acne

Doxycycline can also be used in the prevention of malaria when travelling to infected areas.

When to take this medicine

Doxycycline is usually taken once or twice a day.

Doxycycline tablets should be taken with food and a large glass of water. You should remain upright (standing or sitting up) for up to 2 hours afterwards. This is to avoid irritation and ulceration to your oesophagus (food-pipe).

If you are taking doxycycline for the prevention of malaria, start taking it 1 or 2 days before travelling to an area where there is malaria. Continue taking doxycycline for 4 weeks after leaving the area. You should not take doxycycline for the prevention of malaria for more than 4 months.

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:

- Skin reactions – discolouration or darken spots or patches of skin, red skin, and/or the skin may peel or blister
- pain or burning in the oesophagus (food-pipe), difficulty swallowing
- joint or back pain
- darken the colour of your skin, nails, eyes, teeth, gums or scars
- allergic reaction e.g. itching or hives, swelling of the face or hands, tingling in your mouth or throat, chest tightness or trouble breathing
- jaundice symptoms (yellowing of the skin or eyes)
- unusual bleeding or bruising
- severe headache, dizziness or changes in vision
- confusion

If you experience severe stomach cramps, diarrhoea or both in combination with fever several weeks after finishing doxycycline tablets, tell your doctor immediately. You may have a serious condition affecting your bowel.

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

- signs of super infection –white patches in mouth, vaginal itching or discharge
- loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea
- sore mouth
- headache
- extreme tiredness or weakness
- dry mouth

This list of side effects is **not** complete. Tell your doctor or pharmacist if any of these side effects are of a concern to you.

Also, doxycycline may increase the effects of systemic lupus erythematosus (lupus), a disease where the body attacks its own cells and/or tissues.

Caution

- Do not take this medication if you are under 12 years of age
- Do not take this medication if you are pregnant or breastfeeding
- Doxycycline may cause **photosensitivity**, this means your skin will burn more easily in the sun. Wear protective clothing, sunscreen and limit your exposure to direct sunlight while on doxycycline

Other Medication

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

Some medicines may interfere with doxycycline tablets; discuss this with your doctor or pharmacist if you are taking any of the following medications:

- phenytoin and barbiturates – used to treat epilepsy (reduce the effect of doxycycline)
- iron or zinc preparations – including vitamin preparation which contain these (separate dose by 2 hours from doxycycline)
- antacids, aluminium, calcium, or magnesium (separate dose by 2 hours from doxycycline)
- oral contraceptives may be less effective, use non-hormonal forms of contraception during treatment
- warfarin (doxycycline can increase the effect of warfarin – extra INR monitoring may be required)

Storage

Keep all medicines out of reach of children.

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