



# Doxycycline

**Generic Name:** doxycycline (DOX i SYE kleen)

**Brand Names:** *Acticlate, Adoxa CK, Adoxa Pak, Adoxa TT, Alodox, Avidoxy, Doryx, Mondoxyne NL, Monodox, Morgidox, Oracea, Oraxyl, Periostat Targadox, Vibramycin calcium, Vibramycin Hyclate, Vibramycin monohydrate, Vibra-Tabs*

Medically reviewed by **Kaci Durbin, MD** Last updated on Apr 1, 2020.

## What is doxycycline?

Doxycycline is a tetracycline **antibiotic** that fights bacteria in the body.

Doxycycline is used to treat many different bacterial infections, such as acne, **urinary tract infections**, intestinal infections, respiratory infections, eye infections, **gonorrhea**, **chlamydia**, syphilis, periodontitis (gum disease), and others.

Doxycycline is also used to treat blemishes, bumps, and acne-like lesions caused by **rosacea**. It will not treat facial redness caused by rosacea.

Some forms of doxycycline are used to prevent malaria, to treat anthrax, or to treat infections caused by mites, ticks, or lice.

## Important information

You should not take doxycycline if you are allergic to any tetracycline antibiotic.

Children younger than 8 years old should use doxycycline only in cases of severe or life-threatening conditions. This medicine can cause permanent yellowing or graying of the teeth in children.

Using doxycycline during pregnancy could harm the unborn baby or cause permanent tooth discoloration later in the baby's life.

## Before taking this medicine

You should not take this medicine if you are allergic to doxycycline or other tetracycline antibiotics such as demeclocycline, minocycline, tetracycline, or tigecycline.

To make sure doxycycline is safe for you, tell your doctor if you have ever had:

- liver disease;
- kidney disease;
- asthma or sulfite allergy;
- increased pressure inside your skull; or
- if you also take isotretinoin, seizure medicine, or a blood thinner such as warfarin (Coumadin).

If you are using doxycycline to treat chlamydia, your doctor may test you to make sure you do not also have gonorrhea, another sexually transmitted disease.

Taking this medicine during pregnancy may affect tooth and bone development in the unborn baby. Taking doxycycline during the last half of pregnancy can cause permanent tooth discoloration later in the baby's life. Tell your doctor if you are pregnant or if you become pregnant while using this medicine.

Doxycycline can make birth control pills less effective. Ask your doctor about using a non-hormonal birth control (condom, diaphragm with spermicide) to prevent pregnancy.

Doxycycline can pass into breast milk and may affect bone and tooth development in a nursing infant. The extent of absorption is unknown. **Do not breastfeed while you are taking this medicine.**

Children should not use this medicine. Doxycycline can cause permanent yellowing or graying of the teeth in children younger than 8 years old.

Children should use doxycycline only in cases of severe or life-threatening conditions such as anthrax or Rocky Mountain spotted fever. The benefit of treating a serious condition may outweigh any risks to the child's tooth development.

## How should I take doxycycline?

Take doxycycline exactly as prescribed by your doctor. Follow all directions on your prescription label. Do not take this medicine in larger or smaller amounts or for longer than recommended.

Take doxycycline with a full glass of water. Drink plenty of liquids while you are taking this medicine.

Most brands of doxycycline may be taken with food or milk if the medicine upsets your stomach. **Different brands of doxycycline may have different instructions about taking them with or without food.**

Take **Oracea** on an empty stomach, at least 1 hour before or 2 hours after a meal.

You may open a regular capsule or break up a regular tablet and sprinkle the medicine into a spoonful of applesauce to make swallowing easier. Swallow right away without chewing. Do not save the mixture for later use. Drink a full glass (8 ounces) of cool water right away.

Do not crush, break, or open a **delayed-release capsule or tablet**. Swallow the pill whole.

You may need to split a doxycycline tablet to get the correct dose. Follow your doctor's instructions.

Measure liquid medicine with the dosing syringe provided, or with a special dose-measuring spoon or medicine cup. If you do not have a dose-measuring device, ask your pharmacist for one.

If you take doxycycline to prevent malaria: Start taking the medicine 1 or 2 days before entering an area where malaria is common. Continue taking the medicine every day during your stay and for at least 4 weeks after you leave the area. Use protective clothing, insect repellents, and mosquito netting around your bed to further prevent mosquito bites that could cause malaria.

Doxycycline is usually **given by injection** only if you are unable to take the medicine by mouth. A healthcare provider will give you this injection as an infusion into a vein.

Use this medicine for the full prescribed length of time. Your symptoms may improve before the infection is completely cleared. Skipping doses may also increase your risk of further infection that is resistant to antibiotics. Doxycycline will not treat a viral infection such as the flu or a common cold.

If you need surgery, tell the surgeon ahead of time that you are using doxycycline.

Store at room temperature away from moisture, heat and light.

Throw away any unused medicine after the expiration date on the label has passed. **Using expired doxycycline can cause damage to your kidneys.**

**See also:**

**Doxycycline dosage information** (in more detail)

## What happens if I miss a dose?

Take the missed dose as soon as you remember. Skip the missed dose if it is almost time for your next scheduled dose. Do not take extra medicine to make up the missed dose.

## What happens if I overdose?

Seek emergency medical attention or call the Poison Help line at 1-800-222-1222.

## What should I avoid while taking doxycycline?

Do not take iron supplements, multivitamins, calcium supplements, antacids, or laxatives within 2 hours before or after taking doxycycline.

Avoid taking any other antibiotics with doxycycline unless your doctor has told you to.

Avoid exposure to sunlight or tanning beds. Doxycycline can make you sunburn more easily. Wear protective clothing and use sunscreen (SPF 30 or higher) when you are outdoors.

Antibiotic medicines can cause diarrhea, which may be a sign of a new infection. **If you have diarrhea that is watery or bloody call your doctor.** Do not use anti-diarrhea medicine unless your doctor tells you to.

## Doxycycline side effects

Get emergency medical help if you have any **signs of an allergic reaction to doxycycline:** (hives, difficult breathing, swelling in your face or throat) **or a severe skin reaction** (fever, sore throat, burning in your eyes, skin pain, red or purple skin rash that spreads and causes blistering and peeling).

**Seek medical treatment if you have a serious drug reaction that can affect many parts of your body.** Symptoms may include: skin rash, fever, swollen glands, flu-like symptoms, muscle aches, severe weakness, unusual bruising, or yellowing of your skin or eyes. This reaction may occur several weeks after you began using doxycycline.

Call your doctor at once if you have:

- severe stomach pain, diarrhea that is watery or bloody;
- throat irritation, trouble swallowing;
- chest pain, irregular heart rhythm, feeling short of breath;
- little or no urination;
- **low white blood cell counts** - fever, chills, swollen glands, body aches, weakness, pale skin, easy bruising or bleeding;
- severe headaches, ringing in your ears, dizziness, nausea, vision problems, pain behind your eyes;
- loss of appetite, upper stomach pain (that may spread to your back), tiredness, nausea or vomiting, fast heart rate, dark urine, jaundice (yellowing of the skin or eyes).

Common doxycycline side effects may include:

- nausea, vomiting, upset stomach, loss of appetite;
- mild diarrhea;
- skin rash or itching;
- darkened skin color; or
- vaginal itching or discharge.

This is not a complete list of side effects and others may occur. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.

**See also:**

**Doxycycline side effects** (in more detail)

## What other drugs will affect doxycycline?

**Sometimes it is not safe to use certain medications at the same time.** Some drugs can affect your blood levels of other drugs you take, which may increase side effects or make the medications less effective.

Other drugs may interact with doxycycline, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal products. Tell each of your health care providers about all medicines you use now and any medicine you start or stop using.

**See also:**

**Doxycycline drug interactions** (in more detail)

## Further information

Remember, keep this and all other medicines out of the reach of children, never share your medicines with others, and use this medication only for the indication prescribed.

Always consult your healthcare provider to ensure the information displayed on this page applies to your personal circumstances.

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## Related questions

- **How long does doxycycline stay in your body after you finish your prescribed amount?**
- **Can I take doxycycline if I am allergic to penicillin?**
- **What is doxycycline hyclate used for?**
- **Is doxycycline hydrochloride 100mg a sulfa based drug?**
- **Can you smoke cigarettes or marijuana while on doxycycline hyclate 100mg?**
- **Can I take doxycycline hyclate for strep throat?**
- **Will it be harmful to take doxycycline with iron supplements?**
- **Can taking doxycycline for acne worsen my skin?**
- **What is the best antibiotic to treat a sinus infection?**
- **What antibiotics are used to treat pneumonia?**
- **How long after stopping doxycycline can I drink alcohol?**