This leaflet has been written specifically about the use of this medicine in children. The information may differ from that provided by the manufacturer. Please read this leaflet carefully. Keep it somewhere safe so that you can read it again.

If your child has ever had a reaction to any antibiotic, check with your doctor that your child can have azithromycin before giving it.

Name of drug
Azithromycin
Brand name: Zithromax®

Why is it important for my child to take this medicine?
It is important that your child takes this medicine in the way that your doctor has told you to so that it kills the bacteria and gets rid of the infection.

What is azithromycin available as?
- Tablets: 250 mg, 500 mg
- Capsules: 250 mg
- Liquid medicine (suspension): 200 mg in 5 mL; some may contain a small amount of sugar

When should I give azithromycin?
Azithromycin is usually given once a day. This is usually in the morning.
Give the medicine at about the same time(s) each day so that this becomes part of your child’s daily routine, which will help you to remember.

How much should I give?
Your doctor will work out the amount of azithromycin (the dose) that is right for your child. The dose will be shown on the medicine label.

It is important that you follow your doctor’s instructions about how much to give.

How should I give it?

Tablets and capsules should be swallowed with a glass of water, milk or juice. Your child should not chew the tablet.

Liquid medicine: Shake the bottle well and measure out the right amount using an oral syringe or medicine spoon. You can get these from your pharmacist. Do not use a kitchen teaspoon as it will not give the right amount.

When should the medicine start working?
The medicine will start working straight away and your child should start to get better after taking the medicine for 2 days. It is important that they take the whole course of medicine that has been prescribed. Do not stop early.

What if my child is sick (vomits)?
- If your child is sick less than 30 minutes after having a dose of azithromycin, give them the same dose again.
- If your child is sick more than 30 minutes after having a dose of azithromycin, you do not need to give them another dose. Wait until the next normal dose.

What if I forget to give it?
Give the missed dose when you remember during the day, as long as this is at least 12 hours before the next dose is due.

What if I give too much?
Azithromycin is normally a safe drug. It is unlikely to cause any problems if you give an extra dose by mistake.
If you think you may have given your child too much azithromycin, contact your doctor or local NHS services (111 in England and Scotland; 0845 46 47 in Wales). Have the medicine or packaging with you if you telephone for advice.

Are there any possible side-effects?
We use medicines to make our children better, but sometimes they have other effects that we don’t want (side-effects).

Side-effects that you must do something about
- If your child is short of breath or is wheezing, or their face, lips or tongue start to swell, or they develop a rash, take your child to hospital or call an ambulance straight away.

Other side-effects you need to know about
- Your child may get diarrhoea or stomach pains and may feel sick (nausea) or be sick (vomit) when they first start taking azithromycin. Giving the medicine with some food or milk may help.
- Contact your doctor if your child has diarrhoea that goes on for more than 4 days or if it is severe and watery, or contains blood.
- Your child may have a mild skin rash or itching.
- Your child may get headaches when taking azithromycin and they may feel sleepy or say they have a funny taste in their mouth. These side effects usually go once they stop taking the medicine.

There may, sometimes, be other side-effects that are not listed above. If you notice anything unusual and are concerned, contact your doctor.
**Can other medicines be given at the same time as azithromycin?**

- You can give your child medicines that contain paracetamol or ibuprofen, unless your doctor has told you not to.
- Azithromycin should not be taken with some medicines that you get on prescription. Tell your doctor and pharmacist about any other medicines that your child is taking before giving azithromycin.
- Check with your doctor or pharmacist before giving any other medicines to your child. This includes herbal or complementary medicines.

**Is there anything else I need to know about this medicine?**

- Azithromycin is a type of antibiotic called a macrolide. Your child should not have azithromycin if they are allergic to any macrolide antibiotics (for example, erythromycin or clithromycin).
- If your child has ever had an allergic reaction or other reaction to any medicine, tell your doctor. If you have forgotten to tell your doctor, check with the doctor or pharmacist before giving azithromycin to your child.

**Where should I keep this medicine?**

- Keep the medicine in a cupboard, away from heat and direct sunlight.
- You may need to keep liquid medicine in the fridge – check the instructions on the bottle. Make sure that the medicine doesn’t freeze.
- Make sure that children cannot see or reach the medicine.
- Keep the medicine in the container it came in.

**Who to contact for more information**

Your doctor, pharmacist or nurse will be able to give you more information about azithromycin and about other medicines used to treat bacterial infections.

You can also get useful information from:

- **England**
  NHS 111: 111 - www.nhs.uk
- **Scotland**
- **Wales/Galw Lechyd Cymru**
  NHS Direct: 0845 4647 - www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk
- **Northern Ireland**
  NI Direct: www.nidirect.gov.uk

**Important things to know about taking antibiotics**

- It is important that your child completes the course of antibiotic. This means that they must take the medicine for the number of days that the doctor has told you to, or until all of the medicine has been taken. If you stop giving the antibiotic too soon, the bacteria that are left will start to multiply again, and may cause another infection. There is also a risk that these bacteria will be ‘resistant’ to the first antibiotic. This means that it might not work next time, and your child might need a different antibiotic, which might not work as well or cause more side-effects.
- Children are sometimes sick (vomit) or get diarrhoea when taking antibiotics. Encourage them to drink water to replace the fluid they have lost.
- Do not give your child any medicine to stop the diarrhoea unless your doctor has told you to.

- Try to give the medicine at about the same times each day, to help you remember, and to make sure that there is the right amount of medicine in your child’s body to kill the bacteria.
- Only give this medicine to your child for their current infection.
- Never save medicine for future illnesses. Give old or unused antibiotics to your pharmacist to dispose of.
- Only give the antibiotic to the child for whom it was prescribed. Never give it to anyone else, even if their condition appears to be the same, as this could do harm.

If you think someone else may have taken the medicine by accident, contact your doctor for advice.

- Antibiotics only kill bacteria; they do not kill viruses. This means that they do not work against colds, sore throats, flu or other infections that are caused by viruses. Your doctor will not prescribe antibiotics for these illnesses.

[www.medicinesforchildren.org.uk](http://www.medicinesforchildren.org.uk)