



# Amoxicillin for bacterial infections

This leaflet is for parents and carers about how to use this medicine in children. Our information sometimes differs from that provided by the manufacturers, because their information is usually aimed at adults. 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 medicine, tell your doctor **before** giving amoxicillin

## Name of drug

**Amoxicillin** (sometimes spelt amoxycillin)

**Common brands:** Amoxil®, Amix®, Amoram®, Amoxident®, Galenamox®, Rimoxallin®

## 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 harmful bacteria and gets rid of the infection.

## What is amoxicillin available as?

- **Capsules:** 250 mg and 500 mg
- **Liquid medicine (suspension):** 125 mg or 250 mg in 5 mL and 125mg in 1.25ml: these may contain a small amount of sugar. Sugar-free preparations are also available.

## When should I give amoxicillin?

Amoxicillin is usually given **three times a day**. This should be first thing in the morning, early afternoon and at bedtime. Ideally, these times should be at least 4 hours apart.

## How much should I give?

Your doctor will work out the amount of amoxicillin (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?

Amoxicillin can be taken with or without food.



**Capsules** should be swallowed whole with a glass of water, milk or squash (but not juice). Your child should not chew the capsules.



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

You can also dilute the right amount of medicine (measured with a medicine spoon) in a small amount of water or milk.

## When should the medicine start working?

Your child should start to get better after taking the medicine for 2 days. It is important that they **take the whole course** of the 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 amoxicillin, give them the same dose again.
- If your child is sick more than 30 minutes after having a dose of amoxicillin, you **do not** need to give them another dose. Wait until the next normal dose.

If your child is sick again, seek advice from your family doctor, pharmacist, hospital doctor or nurse.

## What if I forget to give it?

- If you remember up to 1 hour after you should have given a dose, give the missed dose.
- If you remember after this time, do not give the missed dose. Wait until the next normal dose.

## What if I give too much?

You are unlikely to cause harm if you give an extra dose of amoxicillin by mistake.

If you think you may have given your child too much amoxicillin, contact your doctor or local NHS services (details at end of leaflet). Have the medicine container or packet 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 are rare with amoxicillin and do not usually last for long. They will get better after a day or two as your child's body gets used to the medicine, and should go away when the treatment course is finished.

## Side-effects 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, they may be allergic to amoxicillin. Take your child to hospital or phone for an ambulance straight away.

- If your child develops a lumpy red rash, tell your doctor, as your child may have glandular fever or another viral infection.

## Other side-effects you need to know about

- Your child may have diarrhoea, stomach pains, feel sick or be sick (vomit) when they first start to take amoxicillin. Encourage them to drink water to replace any fluid they have lost.
- Contact your doctor or local NHS services (details at end of leaflet) or take your child to hospital if they:
  - » have diarrhoea that lasts for more than 4 days or it is severe, watery or contains blood.
  - » are drowsy, floppy or do not respond.
- **Do not** give your child any medicine to stop the diarrhoea, unless your doctor has told you to.

## 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 them to, or until all the medicine has been taken.
- If you stop giving the antibiotic too soon, the bacteria that are left may start to multiply again, and may cause another infection.
- In the past, doctors may have prescribed antibiotics for many types of infection. However, this practice is now changing with the growing concern about the risk of antibiotic resistance.
- Bacteria that become “resistant” to a common antibiotic are no longer killed by it, and infections may become harder to treat. It is therefore important that antibiotics are used only when needed.

- Many common illnesses, such as sore throats, colds, coughs and flu, are caused by viruses. Antibiotics do not kill viruses. Your doctor will not prescribe antibiotics for these illnesses.
- Try to give the antibiotic 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/unused antibiotics to your pharmacist to dispose of.
- Only give the antibiotic to the child it was prescribed for. Never give it to anyone else, even if their condition appears to be the same, as it could do harm.



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

## Other side-effects you need to know about (continued)

- You may see white patches inside your child’s mouth and throat, and girls may get itching or soreness around the vagina. This is caused by a fungal infection called thrush. If you think your child may have thrush, contact your doctor or pharmacist for advice.

There may, sometimes, be other side-effects that are not listed above. If you notice anything unusual and are concerned, contact your doctor. You can report any suspected side-effects to a UK safety scheme at [www.mhra.gov.uk/yellowcard](http://www.mhra.gov.uk/yellowcard)

## Can other medicines be given at the same time as amoxicillin?

- You can give your child medicines that contain paracetamol or ibuprofen, unless your doctor has told you not to.
- Check with your doctor or pharmacist **before** giving any other medicines to your child. This includes herbal and complementary medicines.

## Is there anything else I need to know about amoxicillin?



Amoxicillin is a type of penicillin antibiotic. Your child should not have amoxicillin if they are allergic to penicillin antibiotics. If your child has ever had an allergic reaction or other reaction to any medicine, tell your doctor **before** giving amoxicillin.

## Where should I keep this medicine?

- Keep this medicine in a cupboard, away from heat, direct sunlight and excess moisture (do not keep it in the bathroom).
- You may need to keep liquid medicine in the fridge – check the instructions on the bottle. Make sure the medicine does not 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 child’s doctor, pharmacist or nurse will be able to give you more information about amoxicillin and about other medicines used to treat infections.

You can also get useful information from:

### England: NHS 111

Tel 111

[www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

### Scotland: NHS 24

Tel 111

[www.nhs24.scot](http://www.nhs24.scot)

### Wales: NHS Direct

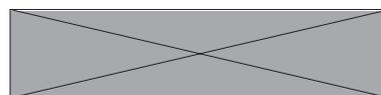
Tel 0845 46 47 (2p per minute) or 111 (free)

[www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk](http://www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk)

### Northern Ireland: NI Direct

[www.nidirect.gov.uk](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk)

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



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The primary source for the information in this leaflet is the British National Formulary for Children. For details on any other sources used for this leaflet, please contact us through our website, [www.medicinesforchildren.org.uk](http://www.medicinesforchildren.org.uk)

We take great care to make sure that the information in this leaflet is correct and up-to-date. However, medicines can be used in different ways for different patients. It is important that you ask the advice of your doctor or pharmacist if you are not sure about something. This leaflet is about the use of these medicines in the UK, and may not apply to other countries. The Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health (RCPCH), the Neonatal and Paediatric Pharmacists Group (NPPG), WellChild and the contributors and editors cannot be held responsible for the accuracy of information, omissions of information, or any actions that may be taken as a consequence of reading this leaflet.