



# Co-amoxiclav for bacterial infections

This leaflet is about the use of the antibiotic co-amoxiclav for the treatment of bacterial infections.

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 co-amoxiclav **before** giving it.

## Name of drug

### Co-amoxiclav

**Common brands:** Augmentin®, Augmentin-Duo®

Co-amoxiclav contains two medicines: amoxicillin, which is an antibiotic, and clavulanic acid, which helps the amoxicillin to work better.

## 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 their infection.

## What is co-amoxiclav available as?

- **Tablets:** 250mg Amoxicillin/125 mg Clavulanic acid and 500/125 mg
- **Liquid medicine:** 125/31 mg (125 mg amoxicillin/31.25 mg clavulanic acid), 250/62 mg or 400/57 mg in 5 mL

Augmentin and Augmentin-Duo contain aspartame.

## When should I give co-amoxiclav?

- Co-amoxiclav is usually given **three times** a day. This should be first thing in the morning, early afternoon (or after school) and at bedtime. Ideally, these times are at least 4 hours apart.
- Augmentin-Duo is usually only given two times a day.

Give the medicine at about the same times 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 co-amoxiclav (the dose) that is right for *your* child. The dose will be shown on the medicine label.



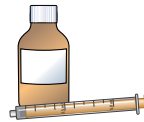
**It is important that you follow your doctor's instructions about how much to give.**

## How should I give it?

This medicine works best when the stomach is empty, so try to give it to your child ½–1 hour before they eat. However, if your child has an upset stomach, you can give it with a small amount of food.



**Tablets** should be swallowed with a glass of water, milk or juice. Your child should not chew the tablets.



**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.

## 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 co-amoxiclav, give them the same dose again.
- If your child is sick more than 30 minutes after having a dose of co-amoxiclav, 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 GP, pharmacist or hospital. They will decide what to do based on your child's condition and the specific medicine involved.

## 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.
- If you forget to give the dose before your child has eaten, but remember during the meal, give them the dose straight after finishing the meal.

## What if I give too much?

You are unlikely to do any harm if you give an extra dose of co-amoxiclav by mistake. If you are concerned that you may have given too much, contact your doctor or local NHS services (111 in England and Scotland; 0845 4647 in Wales) or take your child to hospital. 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). Co-amoxiclav is generally a safe drug. However, it sometimes has serious side effects.


## Side-effects you must do something about




If your child gets a skin rash, itching or hives, has problems breathing or seems short of breath or is wheezing, or if their face, throat, lips or tongue start to swell, they may be allergic to co-amoxiclav. **Take them to hospital or call an ambulance straight away.**

## 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.

## Side-effects you must do something about (continued)


-  Contact your doctor for advice if your child develops any of these symptoms. Do not give any more co-amoxiclav.
- If they get a rash or any skin problems such as blisters, spots, peeling, scaling, redness or other colour change.
  - If they have diarrhoea that lasts for more than a day or two and particularly if it contains blood or is very pale, or the urine (wee) is dark, or the skin or the white part of the eyes seems yellow (jaundiced).

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 <http://www.mhra.gov.uk/yellowcard>.

## Can other medicines be given at the same time as co-amoxiclav?

- You can give your child medicines that contain paracetamol or ibuprofen, unless your doctor has told you not to.
- Co-amoxiclav should not be taken with some common drugs that you get on prescription. If your child is taking any other medicines, tell your doctor and pharmacist.
- 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 co-amoxiclav?

-  Co-amoxiclav contains amoxicillin, which is a type of antibiotic called penicillin. Your child should not have amoxicillin if they are allergic to any penicillin antibiotic. Make sure you tell your doctor if your child has ever shown any signs of penicillin allergy.

## Where should I keep this medicine?

- Keep this medicine in a cupboard, away from heat and direct sunlight. The liquid medicine needs to be kept in the fridge.
- The liquid medicine does not keep for long once it has been opened. Write the date that you start it on the bottle and make sure you follow the instructions on the bottle.
- 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 co-amoxiclav and about other medicines used to treat infections.

You can also get useful information from:

### England

NHS 111: 111 - [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

### Scotland

NHS 24: 111 - [www.nhs24.com](http://www.nhs24.com)

### Wales/Galw Lechyd Cymru

NHS Direct: 0845 4647 - [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.