



Loratadine for allergy symptoms

This leaflet is about the use of loratadine to reduce the symptoms of allergy, such as in hay fever, urticaria (itchy rash) or pruritis (itchy skin)



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.

Name of drug

Loratadine

Loratadine is available as many common brands, including: Clarityn Allergy or Clarityn Rapide Allergy.

Why is it important for my child to take this medicine?

Loratadine is a medicine known as an antihistamine. When the body comes into contact with something it is allergic to, such as pollen, animal hair or fur, house dust or insect bites, it produces a chemical called histamine. This causes itchy, watery eyes, running or blocked nose, sneezing and rashes. Loratadine blocks the effects of histamine and so reduces these symptoms.

Most children only need to take an antihistamine for a short while when they have symptoms of allergy.

What is loratadine available as?

- **Tablets:** 10 mg
- **Liquid medicine:** 5 mg in 5 mL

When should I give loratadine?

In some children, loratadine is used only when it is needed (e.g. when they are exposed to a trigger such as animal hair). In other children, it is used regularly (e.g. for hay fever during spring or summer). Loratadine should be stopped once it is no longer needed.

- Loratadine is usually given once each day. This is usually in the morning but can depend on the timing of the symptoms and whether the medication has any sedating effect on the individual.
- Your doctor may have told you to give loratadine when your child's symptoms are usually worse e.g. give in the morning if symptoms are worse in the day or in the evening if symptoms are worse then. You should follow your doctor's instructions on when to give loratadine.

Give the medicine at about the same time 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 loratadine (the dose) that is right for *your* child. The dose will be shown on the medicine label if you have been given a prescription.

If you have bought your medicine over the counter, then please follow the instructions on the package carefully. If you are not sure how much to give, then contact your pharmacist or doctor.



It is important that you follow your doctor's instructions or the instructions on the packaging about how much to give.

How should I give it?



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



Liquid medicine: 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?

Loratadine usually starts to work straight away. If your child has been in contact with something they are allergic to and has symptoms, the symptoms should go away within 30 to 60 minutes, but if the medicine is being used to prevent an allergic reaction you may not see much difference in your child.

What if my child is sick (vomits)?

- If your child is sick less than 30 minutes after having a dose of loratadine, give them the same dose again.
- If your child is sick more than 30 minutes after having a dose of loratadine, 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 usually give it once a day in the morning

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?

You are unlikely to do harm if you give an extra dose of loratadine by mistake. If you are concerned that you may have given too much, contact your doctor or local NHS services (details at end of leaflet). 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 you need to know about

Your child is unlikely to get side-effects with loratadine. If the following side-effects do occur, they are usually mild and wear off after a few days. If they are still a problem after a week, consult your doctor.

- Your child may be drowsy (feel sleepy) for a few hours after each dose.
- Your child may get a headache, feel dizzy or lightheaded, or they may feel restless or agitated.
- They may have a dry mouth. Eating citrus fruits (e.g. oranges) and taking sips of water may help.
- Their eyesight (vision) may seem blurred.
- Your child may have an upset tummy (stomach ache).

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.


More information on side-effects can be found in the following leaflet www.medicinesforchildren.org.uk/side-effects-childrens-medicines

Can other common medicines be given at the same time as loratadine?

- You can give your child medicines that contain paracetamol or ibuprofen, unless your doctor has told you not to.
- Loratadine should not be taken with some medicines that you get on prescription. Tell your doctor and pharmacist about any other medicines your child is taking before giving loratadine.
- 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?

- Loratadine can affect the ability to do skilled tasks such as riding a bicycle, playing sports and driving. Your child should take care when doing tasks that require coordination, due to potential drowsiness, until they get used to the medicine.

 If your child has epilepsy, check with your doctor before you give them loratadine as it may increase the chance of your child having a seizure (fit).

General advice about medicines

- Try to give medicines at about the same times each day, to help you remember when to give them to your child.
- If you are not sure a medicine is working, contact your doctor but continue to give the medicine as usual in the meantime. Do not give extra doses, as you may do harm.
- Only give this medicine to your child. 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 a doctor for advice.
- Make sure that you always have enough medicine. Order a new prescription at least 2 weeks before you will run out.
- Make sure that the medicine you have at home has not reached the 'best before' or 'use by' date on the packaging. Give old medicines to your pharmacist to dispose of.

Where should I keep this medicine?

- Keep the medicine in a cupboard, away from heat and direct sunlight. It does not need to be kept in the fridge.
- 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 loratadine and about other medicines used to treat allergy with sneezing, wheezing or itching.

You can also get more information from:

England: NHS 111

Tel 111 - www.nhs.uk

Scotland: NHS 24

Tel 111 - www.nhs24.scot

Wales: NHS 111 Wales

Tel 111 - www.111.wales.nhs.uk

Northern Ireland: NI Direct

www.nidirect.gov.uk

Allergy UK

01322 619 898 - www.allergyuk.org

Itchy Sneezzy Wheezy

www.itchysneezzywheezy.co.uk

www.medicinesforchildren.org.uk