

Co-careldopa for dystonia



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.

Do not stop giving co-careldopa suddenly as your child may get withdrawal effects.

Name of medicine

Co-careldopa

Contains carbidopa and levodopa

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

Children with dystonia can get painful and distressing movements and muscle spasms, which may make movement, sitting and standing difficult. Co-careldopa acts in the brain to slow down messages to the muscles and nerves. This reduces muscle stiffness and improves comfort.


What is co-careldopa available as?

- **Tablets:** 12.5 mg/50 mg, 25 mg/100 mg, 25 mg/250 mg (the first number is the amount of carbidopa; the second is the amount of levodopa)
- **Liquid medicine:** you may be able to order liquid medicine from your pharmacy

When should I give co-careldopa?

Co-careldopa is usually given **two or three times** each day. Give the last dose around 6 pm – you may find that co-careldopa affects your child's sleep if you give it any later in the evening.

- **If it is to be given twice each day**, give one dose in the morning and one in the afternoon. Ideally, these times are 8–10 hours apart. For example, this could be between 7 and 8 am and between 5 and 6 pm.
- **If it is to be given three times each day**, these times should be 4–6 hours apart, depending on what time your child wakes up and goes to bed. For example, this could be between 7 and 8 am, at about midday, and between 5 and 6 pm.
- 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.
- Your doctor may suggest that you start by giving co-careldopa twice a day for a few days, then three times a day.

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

How much should I give?

- Your doctor will work out the amount of medicine (the dose) that is right for your child. The dose will be shown on the medicine label.
- Your doctor may suggest that your child has a low dose to start with. They may then increase the dose as your child gets used to the medicine and depending on how well it works. Your doctor will explain what to do.

How should I give it?



Tablets should be swallowed with a glass of water, juice or similar. Your child should not chew the tablets. You can crush a tablet and

mix it with a small amount of soft food such as yogurt, jam or mashed potato. Make sure your child swallows it all straight away, without chewing.

Your doctor may recommend that you dissolve a tablet in water and give a set amount of the solution each time. Your doctor will tell you how much water to dissolve the tablet in, and how much to give your child. Use a new tablet each time you make the mixture, mix it thoroughly, and measure out the right amount into an oral syringe. If you are not sure how to do this, ask your pharmacist to show you.



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 to work?

It may take a few days or sometimes weeks for co-careldopa to work properly. This is because the amount of medicine has to be increased slowly. Continue to give the medicine as you have been told to by your doctor. It may take a while to find the dose that works best for your child.

What if my child is sick (vomits)?

- If your child is sick less than 30 minutes after having a dose of co-careldopa, give the same dose again.
- If your child is sick more than 30 minutes after having a dose of co-careldopa, you do not need to give another dose. Wait until the next normal dose.
- If your child is sick again, seek advice from your doctor, pharmacist or hospital. They will decide what to do based on your child's condition and the medicine involved.


What if I forget to give it?

If you usually give it twice a day

If you remember up to 4 hours after you should have given a dose, give your child the missed dose. For example, if you usually give a dose at about 7 am, you can give the missed dose at any time up to 11 am. If you remember after that time, do not give the missed dose. Just give the next dose as usual.

If you usually give it three times a day

Do not give the missed dose. Give the next dose as usual.

 Never give a double dose of co-careldopa

What if I think I have given too much?

If you think you may have given your child too much co-careldopa, contact your doctor or local NHS services (details at end of leaflet), or take your child to hospital.

Take the medicine container or packaging with you, even if it is empty. This will be useful to the doctor. 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 cause effects that we don't want (side-effects).

Side-effects you must do something about

Contact your doctor if you notice any of the following symptoms:

- your child starts twitching, twisting or has body movements they can't control
- your child seems more sleepy than normal, or falls asleep suddenly
- they want to eat a lot or have other obsessive behaviours
- they get mouth ulcers, bruising or bleeding gums
- your child seems confused or disorientated or has hallucinations (seeing things that are not there)
- they have mood changes or seem depressed or anxious.

Other side-effects you need to know about

Your child may get these side-effects when they first start taking co-careldopa. They will usually settle down within a week or so as your child's body gets used to the medicine. Continue to give co-careldopa as your doctor has told you to during this time. If any of these side-effects continue for longer than a week or so, or if you are worried, contact your doctor.

- Your child may feel less hungry (lose their appetite), and feel sick (nausea) or be sick (vomit).
- Your child may feel dizzy or light-headed when they stand up, or may faint. Encourage them to stand up slowly, and to sit or lie down if they feel dizzy or light-headed.
- Your child may have difficulty sleeping.
- Their urine (wee), sweat or saliva may have a reddish colour. This is normal with this medicine and is not cause for concern.

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 [mhra.gov.uk/yellowcard](https://www.mhra.gov.uk/yellowcard).

More information on side-effects can be found in a [leaflet](#) on our website.

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

- You can give your child medicines that contain ibuprofen or paracetamol, unless your doctor has told you not to.
- Co-careldopa 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 co-careldopa.
- 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 this medicine?

- Do not suddenly stop giving co-careldopa, as your child may get withdrawal symptoms.
- If your doctor decides to stop this medicine, they will discuss this with you. You will usually reduce the dose bit by bit. If you or your child want to stop this medicine, discuss this with your doctor.
- Co-careldopa is also used to treat Parkinson's disease in adults. If you look for information on co-careldopa, make sure it relates to dystonia in children, as different doses may be used for different conditions.

General advice about medicines

- Try to give medicines at about the same times each day, to help you remember.
- 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 or NHS local services (details at end of leaflet) 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 doctor, pharmacist or nurse will be able to give you more information about co-careldopa and about other medicines used to treat dystonia.

You can also get useful information from:

England: NHS 111 Tel 111 [nhs.uk](https://www.nhs.uk)

Scotland: NHS 24 Tel 111 [nhs24.scot](https://www.nhs24.scot)

Wales: NHS 111 Wales Tel 111 111.wales.nhs.uk

Northern Ireland: NI Direct nidirect.gov.uk

Dystonia UK: dystonia.org.uk

www.medicinesforchildren.org.uk