



Mexiletine for abnormal heart rhythm

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.

- Mexiletine can be dangerous if too much is given. Make sure you follow the instructions you have been given.
- Keep this medicine away from young children, as accidental use can result in serious harm.
- Do not stop giving mexiletine suddenly, as this may cause serious side-effects.

Name of medicine

Mexiletine

Mexiletine is provided by a number of different manufacturers and sold as mexiletine. It is no longer sold under a brand name.

 Note that children must not take the brand Namuscla. This brand contains mexiletine and is used to treat muscle conditions in adults. If you are given this, return it to your pharmacy. Do not give it to your child.

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

In some children the heart beat does not have a regular rhythm or pattern. This is called arrhythmia. Mexiletine will help your child's heart to beat with a proper rhythm and rate (speed) so that it pumps blood around the body more efficiently.

What is mexiletine available as?

Capsules: 50 mg, 100 mg, 200 mg

Liquid medicine can be ordered from your pharmacy

When should I give mexiletine?

Mexiletine may be given once, twice or three times each day. Your health professional will tell you how often to give it.

- **Once a day:** this can be in the morning OR in the evening.
- **Twice a day:** this should be once in the morning and once in the evening. Ideally, these times are 10–12 hours apart, for example sometime between 7 and 8 am, and between 7 and 8 pm.
- **Three times each day:** this should be once in the morning, once in the early afternoon and once in the evening. Ideally, these times are at least 6 hours apart, for example 8 am, 2 pm and 8 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.

How much should I give?

- Your health professional 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 your child responds to it.
- Do not reduce or change the dose unless your health professional tells you to.

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

How should I give it?

It is best to give this medicine after some food or milk so that it is less likely to upset your child's stomach.



Capsules should be swallowed whole with a glass of water or juice. Your child should not chew the capsule. You can open the capsule and

mix the contents into some water or juice. Your health professional will tell you how much liquid to use and how much of the mixture to give your child. Give the right amount to your child straight away, using an oral syringe. Pour any leftover mixture into a paper towel and put this in the bin.



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. Make sure your child takes it all straight away.

When should the medicine start to work?

The medicine should start working straight away.

What if my child is sick (vomits)?

- If your child is sick after having a dose of mexiletine, 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 health professional. 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 once a day

- If you remember up to 12 hours after you should have given the 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 usually give it twice a day

If you remember within 4 hours, give your child the missed dose. For example, if you usually give a dose at 7 am, you can give the missed dose at any time up to 11 am. If you remember after this time, do not give the missed dose. Wait until it is time to give the next normal dose.

If you usually give it three times a day

You do not need to give the missed dose. Give the next dose as normal.

What if I think I have given too much?



It may be dangerous to give too much mexiletine.

If your child has any of the following symptoms, they may have had too much mexiletine:

- they feel faint, dizzy, or cold and sweaty
- they have a weak or rapid heart rate (they may feel as though their heart is racing or fluttering)
- their chest feels uncomfortable
- they are breathing more quickly than normal
- they have a seizure (fit).

If you think your child may have had too much mexiletine, contact your healthcare team or take your child to hospital.

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



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 mexiletine. Call an ambulance or take them to hospital.



If your child has any of the symptoms listed at the top of this page, in the section, **"What if I think I have given too much?"**:

- Contact your healthcare team or take your child to hospital.
- Take the medicine container or packaging with you, even if it is empty as this will be useful to the health professionals.

Other side-effects you need to know about

- Your child may get headaches, feel dizzy, have little energy, or get a rash. Contact your health professional if you are worried.
- Your child's eyesight may be blurred (fuzzy).
- Your child may have a dry mouth. Taking sips of water may help.
- Your child may get stomach ache and feel sick (nausea).
- They may also get constipated (have difficulty doing a poo). Encourage them to drink plenty of fluid and to eat foods that contain fibre (e.g. wholemeal foods, fruit and vegetables). If this is still a problem after 2 weeks, contact your health professional.

There may sometimes be other side-effects that are not listed above. If you notice anything unusual and are concerned, contact your health professional.

You can report any suspected side-effects to the UK safety scheme: [MHRA Yellow Card](#).

Can other medicines be given at the same time as mexiletine?

- You can give your child medicines that contain paracetamol or ibuprofen unless your health professional has told you not to.
- Mexiletine should not be taken with some medicines that you get on prescription. Tell your health professional and pharmacist about any other medicines your child is taking before giving mexiletine, including herbal medicines.

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



Do not stop giving mexiletine suddenly, as this may cause serious side-effects.

General advice about medicines

- If you are not sure a medicine is working, contact your health professional 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 health professional straight away.
- 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 'use by' date on the packaging. Give old medicines to your pharmacist to dispose of.

Where should I keep this medicine?

- Keep medicines in a cupboard, away from heat and direct sunlight.
- Check whether liquid medicine needs 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 healthcare team will be able to give you more information about mexiletine and about other medicines used to treat arrhythmias. You can also get useful information from:

England: NHS 111

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

Northern Ireland: NI Direct

nidirect.gov.uk

Scotland: NHS 24

Tel 111 nhs24.scot

Children's Heart Federation

Tel 0300 5610065

Wales: NHS 111 Wales

Tel 111 111.wales.nhs.uk

chfed.org.uk

www.medicinesforchildren.org.uk