

Antacids

Medication Information Leaflet

What is this medication for?

Antacids are a group of medicines which work by lowering the acidity in your stomach. This will relieve symptoms of heartburn, gastric reflux and indigestion. These medicines may be available over-the-counter without a prescription. Antacids may be found in either liquid or tablet form. They may contain ingredients such as:

- Aluminum
- Calcium
- Magnesium
- Sodium bicarbonate

How should I take/use this medication?

- Take a dose when necessary to relieve symptoms of heartburn, gastric reflux or indigestion
- Do not take more than four doses in one day
- You may take this medicine before or after food
- Tablet forms should be chewed before swallowing for faster relief of symptoms
- Liquid forms should be shaken well before taking

What should I do if I forget to take/use this medication?

If you forget to take a dose, take it as soon as you remember. Then take your next dose at the usual time. Do not take two doses to make up for the missed dose.

What precautions should I take?

Inform your healthcare professional if:

- You are allergic to this medicine or any of the other ingredients of this medicine
- You have a history of liver disease, kidney disease or heart failure
- You are taking or intend to take any other medicines, supplements, traditional medications or herbal remedies

What are some common side-effects of this medication?

- Antacids containing aluminum may cause constipation
 - If this happens, use an antacid that does not contain aluminium instead
- Antacids containing magnesium may cause diarrhoea
 - If this happens, use an antacid that does not contain magnesium instead

What are some rare but serious side-effects that I need to seek medical advice immediately?

The symptoms of a drug allergy include one or more of the following:

- Swollen face/eyes/lips/tongue
- Difficulty in breathing
- Itchy skin rashes over your whole body

Signs that your condition may require further medical attention include:

- Shortness of breath, hoarseness, wheezing, teeth erosion and ear infection
- Pain on swallowing, swallowing difficulty, blood in the stools or vomit, chest pain, unintended weight loss and jaundice (yellowing of the skin and whites of the eyes)
- Heartburn symptoms occurring for more than 3 times a week with significant impact on quality of life
- Heartburn symptoms continuing for more than 2 weeks despite self-treatment
- Heartburn symptoms continuing for over 3 months regardless of self-treatment
- You are over 40 years old and experiencing heartburn symptoms for the first time

If you experience any of these symptoms, you should stop your medication and see your healthcare professional immediately.

What food or medication should I avoid when I take this medication?

This medicine may lower the absorption of medicines such as:

- Antibiotics
- Osteoporosis medicines
- Medicines to treat low thyroid level

Antacids must be taken apart from these medicines by two hours.

How should I store this medication?

Store in a cool and dry place, away from direct sunlight. Keep this medicine away from children.

How should I throw away this medication safely?

Pack this medicine into a black trash bag and seal it tightly before throwing into the rubbish chute or bin.

Disclaimers

If you take more than the recommended dose, please seek medical advice immediately. The information provided on this page does not replace information from your healthcare professional. Please consult your healthcare professional for more information.

This article is jointly developed by members of the National Medication Information workgroup. The workgroup consists of cluster partners (National Healthcare Group, National University Health System and SingHealth), community pharmacies (Guardian, Unity and Watsons) and Pharmaceutical Society of Singapore.

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