

Codeine

Medication Information Leaflet

What is this medication for?

This medication is used to treat pain. It belongs to a class of drugs known as opioids. This medication is also present in some preparations for the treatment of a dry cough.

How should I take/use this medication?

- Take your medication as prescribed by your healthcare professional.
- Take this medication with a glass of water, with or without food.
- The effect of this medication may reduce with time. If you find that this medication does not sufficiently help with your pain at the prescribed dose, please consult your healthcare professional.

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 medication or any of the other ingredients of this medication. This includes a history of allergy to other related drugs including other opioid drugs such as morphine, oxycodone and fentanyl.
- You are taking any other medications, including supplements, traditional medications and herbal remedies.
- You are pregnant, planning to become pregnant, or breastfeeding.
- You have a history of fits. This drug may increase the risk of having a fit.
- You have a history of constipation or obstructive bowel disease.
- You have a history of lung disease including asthma or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).
- You have diseases of the thyroid, bile or inflammatory bowel disease.
- You have low blood pressure.
- You have drug dependence or addiction issues, including alcoholism.

What are some common side-effects of this medication?

- Codeine may cause constipation, dry mouth, nausea and vomiting.
- This medication may cause drowsiness or dizziness which may impair physical or mental abilities. If affected, please do not drive, operate machinery or perform other tasks which require mental alertness.
- This medication has the potential to cause addiction. If you experience difficulty stopping this medication when it is no longer required, please consult your healthcare professional.

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

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

- This medication may depress your breathing. Seek immediate medical attention should you experience breathing difficulty.
- This medication may cause a drop in blood pressure. Seek immediate medical attention should you experience fainting, dizziness or light-headedness or blurred vision.

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

- Codeine can generally be taken with most other foods or medications. However, please inform your healthcare professionals if you are taking other medications or herbal preparations.
- Avoid alcohol. Alcohol may increase the risk of side effects with this medication.

How should I store this medication?

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

How should I throw away this medication safely?

Pack this medication 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. The content does not reflect drug availability and supply information in pharmacies and healthcare institutions. You are advised to check with the respective institutions for such information.

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