

Oxytetracycline tablets



Take oxytetracycline tablets one hour before a meal, or wait until two hours afterwards. Swallow the tablets with plenty of water.

Do not take indigestion remedies, or supplements containing iron, magnesium, or zinc at the same time as oxytetracycline.

Make sure you continue to take this medicine until you finish the course prescribed.

The most common side-effects are stomach upset and diarrhoea.

About oxytetracycline

Type of medicine	Tetracycline antibiotic
Used for	Bacterial infections; acne; rosacea
Available as	Tablets

Oxytetracycline is an antibacterial medicine. This means that it stops infections caused by bacteria. It is prescribed to treat acute bacterial infections, such as chest infections, urine infections, skin infections, and mouth infections. It is also prescribed for some longer-term skin conditions, such as **acne** and **rosacea**.

Before taking oxytetracycline

Some medicines are not suitable for people with certain conditions, and sometimes a medicine may only be used if extra care is taken. For these reasons, before you start taking oxytetracycline it is important that your doctor or dentist knows:

- If you are pregnant or breast-feeding. If so, you should not take oxytetracycline.
- If you are under 12 years of age. Oxytetracycline should not be given to children.
- If you have liver or kidney problems.
- If you have *systemic lupus erythematosus* (an inflammatory condition also called lupus, or SLE) or *myasthenia gravis* (a condition causing muscle weakness). Oxytetracycline can make these conditions worse.
- If you have a rare inherited blood disorder called *porphyria*.
- If you are taking any other medicines. This includes any medicines you are taking which are available to buy without a prescription, such as herbal and complementary medicines.
- If you have ever had an allergic reaction to a medicine.

How to take oxytetracycline

- Before you start this treatment, read the manufacturer's printed information leaflet from inside your pack. The leaflet will give you more information about the tablets and a full list of side-effects which you may experience from taking them.
- Take oxytetracycline exactly as your doctor tells you to. It is likely you will be asked to take one or two tablets every six hours if you are being treated for an acute infection, and two tablets twice daily if you are being treated for acne or rosacea. Your doctor or pharmacist will tell you which dose is right for you, and this will be printed on the label of the pack to remind you.

- It is recommended that you take the tablets when your stomach is empty, which means taking them one hour before food, or waiting until two hours afterwards. This is because taking oxytetracycline at the same time as food or milk will make it less effective.
- The tablets can cause throat irritation. To prevent this, swallow your doses with a large glassful of water while you are standing or sitting upright. Do not break, crush or chew the tablets. It is particularly important that you do not take a dose just before lying down, or at bedtime.
- If you forget to take a dose, take it as soon as you remember and try to space your remaining doses evenly throughout the rest of the day. Do not take two doses together to make up for a missed dose.

Getting the most from your treatment

- Your course of treatment may last a week or so for an acute infection, or for several months if you are taking it for acne or rosacea. It is important you keep taking the tablets until the course is finished, unless you are told to stop by a doctor.
- If you buy any medicines, check with a pharmacist that they are suitable to take with oxytetracycline, as a number of 'over-the-counter' remedies can interfere with it. In particular, do not take indigestion remedies, or supplements containing iron, magnesium, or zinc at the same time. This is because oxytetracycline combines with these things and makes it less effective. If you need to take any of these preparations, make sure you leave at least two hours before or after taking oxytetracycline before you have them.
- Some people develop thrush (redness and itchiness in the mouth or vagina) after taking a course of an antibiotic. If this happens to you, speak with your doctor or pharmacist for advice.
- If you are using combined oral hormonal contraception (the 'pill'), additional contraceptive precautions such as condoms are not required during a course of this antibiotic unless you are sick or have diarrhoea. If you need further advice about this, speak with your doctor or pharmacist.
- Oxytetracycline may cause your skin to become more sensitive to sunlight than usual. Avoid strong sunlight and sunbeds until you know how your skin reacts.
- This antibiotic may stop the oral typhoid vaccine from working. If you are having any vaccinations, make sure the person treating you knows that you are taking this medicine.

Can oxytetracycline cause problems?

Along with their useful effects, most medicines can cause unwanted side-effects although not everyone experiences them. The table below contains some of the most common ones. You will find a full list in the manufacturer's information leaflet supplied with your medicine. The unwanted effects often improve as your body adjusts to the new medicine, but speak with your doctor or pharmacist if any of the following continue or become troublesome.

Common oxytetracycline side-effects	What can I do if I experience this?
Feeling sick, abdominal pain	Stick to simple foods - avoid rich or spicy meals
Diarrhoea	Drink plenty of water to replace lost fluids. If this continues or is severe, speak with a doctor
Headache	Ask your pharmacist to recommend a suitable painkiller

Important: oxytetracycline can occasionally cause allergic reactions, such as a skin rash. Speak with a doctor as soon as possible if this happens.

If you experience any other symptoms which you think may be due to this medicine, speak with your doctor or pharmacist.

How to store oxytetracycline

- Keep all medicines out of the reach and sight of children.
- Store in a cool, dry place, away from direct heat and light.

Important information about all medicines

Never take more than the prescribed dose. If you suspect that you or someone else might have taken an overdose of this medicine go to the accident and emergency department of your local hospital. Take the container with you, even if it is empty.

If you are having an operation or dental treatment, tell the person carrying out the treatment which medicines you are taking.

This medicine is for you. Never give it to other people even if their condition appears to be the same as yours.

Do not keep out-of-date or unwanted medicines. Take them to your local pharmacy which will dispose of them for you.

If you have any questions about this medicine ask your pharmacist.

Further reading & references

- [Manufacturer's PIL, Oxytetracycline Tablets 250 mg](#); Actavis UK Ltd, The electronic Medicines Compendium. Dated August 2009.
- British National Formulary, 65th Edition (Mar 2013) British Medical Association and Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain, London

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