

# PHENYTOIN

**Other names:** Dilantin®, Dilantin Infatabs®



**Important note:** The following information is intended to add to, not replace, the knowledge and judgment of your doctor, pharmacist or other health care professional.

## Why you are taking this medicine?

Phenytoin belongs to a group of medicines known as anticonvulsants or anti-epileptics. It acts on the brain and nervous system to prevent and to treat people with epilepsy (seizures or fits).

Phenytoin can also be used for nerve pain.

## When to take this medicine

- Take phenytoin exactly as directed by your doctor
- Phenytoin **capsules** should be swallowed whole, not crushed or chewed
- Phenytoin **chewable** tablets should be sucked or chewed before swallowing
- Take phenytoin at the same time each day to avoid missing any doses
- If this medicine upsets your stomach, take it with or after food
- Do not take antacids, calcium (e.g. milk) or indigestion remedies at the same time as taking this medicine

**DO NOT STOP** taking this medicine without your doctor's permission.

## If you miss a dose

Take your dose as soon as possible except when it is close to the time for your next dose. If it is almost time for next dose, skip the missed dose and return to your regular dosing schedule. You should not take two doses at the same time.

## Side Effects

Unfortunately as well as having good effects, most medicines have some effects on your body that are unwanted. These are called *side effects*.

Call your doctor **immediately** if you have any of these side effects:

- fever or swollen glands
- continual mouth ulcers or sore throat
- unusual bleeding or bruising
- yellowing of the skin or eyes, or dark urine
- sudden onset of allergy such as a severe skin rash or swelling of the face, lips or other parts of the body
- confusion, slurred speech, double vision and difficulty co-ordinating movements

Tell your doctor or pharmacist if any of these side effects are of a concern to you:

- drowsiness
- dizziness
- redness, irritation, bleeding and swelling of the gums
- upset stomach, vomiting and constipation
- difficulty in sleeping (insomnia)
- mood changes, nervousness
- headache

The list of side effects is **not** complete. Tell your doctor or pharmacist if any side effect is of a concern to you.

### **Other Medicines**

Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you are taking any other medicine including herbal or complementary products and medicines you can buy without a prescription.

Because phenytoin interacts with a range of medicines, it is important that you tell your doctor or pharmacist about all the medicines you are taking.

### **Precautions**

Phenytoin can cause dizziness and drowsiness. Make sure your reactions are normal before driving, operating machinery or doing any other jobs that could be dangerous.

### **Storage**

Keep all medicines out of reach of children.

**Read this leaflet and discuss any questions you have about your medicines with your doctor or pharmacist.**