

Oxytetracycline tablets

Oxytetracycline is an antibiotic. Space out your doses during the day and make sure you continue to take the tablets until you finish the course prescribed.

The absorption of oxytetracycline is adversely affected by food and dairy products. It is important that you take the tablets either one hour before a meal, or wait until two hours afterwards. Do not drink milk during the two hours before you take the tablets, or for two hours afterwards.

About oxytetracycline

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

Oxytetracycline is an antibacterial medicine. This means that it stops infections caused by germs (bacteria). It is prescribed as a treatment for chest infections such as pneumonia, and also for some mouth infections. It is also prescribed for infections resulting from some types of bites, and some sexually transmitted infections.

Oxytetracycline 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 can 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 breastfeeding. 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 any problems with the way your liver works, or if you have any problems with the way your kidneys work.
- If you have an inflammatory condition called systemic lupus erythematosus (also called lupus, or SLE), or if you have a condition causing muscle weakness, called myasthenia gravis. 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, as well as herbal and complementary medicines.
- If you have ever had an allergic reaction to a medicine.

How to take oxytetracycline

- Before you start the treatment, read the manufacturer's printed information leaflet from inside the pack. It will give you more information about oxytetracycline, and will also provide you with a full list of the side-effects which you could experience from taking it.
- Take oxytetracycline exactly as your doctor tells you to. If you have an infection it is likely you will be asked to take one or two tablets every six hours, and if you are being treated for acne or rosacea, the usual dose is two tablets twice daily. Your doctor or pharmacist will tell you which dose is right for you, and this information will also be printed on the label of the pack to remind you about what was said to you.
- Try to take your doses around the same times of day each day. This will help you remember to take them regularly. Space out your doses evenly throughout the day.

- Take the tablets when your stomach is empty. This means taking your doses one hour before you eat food, or waiting until two hours after you have eaten. It is also important that you do not drink milk within two hours (either before or after) of taking oxytetracycline. This is because both food and milk can reduce the amount of medicine absorbed by your body, making it less effective in fighting infection.
- Swallow the tablets with a large drink of water. Try to avoid taking oxytetracycline just before lying down, or at bedtime.
- If you forget to take a dose, take it as soon as you remember. Try to take the correct number of doses each day, but do not take two doses together to make up for a missed dose.

Getting the most from your treatment

- Your course of treatment is likely to last for a week or so if you are being treated for an acute infection. If you are taking oxytetracycline for acne or rosacea, your treatment could last for several months. It is important that you keep taking the tablets until the course of treatment is finished (unless you are told to stop sooner 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, which makes it less effective. If you need to take an antacid or any of the supplements mentioned, 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.
- Oxytetracycline could 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 can stop the oral typhoid vaccine from working. If you are due to have 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 ones associated with oxytetracycline. The best place to find a full list of the side-effects which can be associated with your medicine, is from the manufacturer's printed information leaflet supplied with the medicine. Alternatively, you can find an example of a manufacturer's information leaflet in the reference section below. Speak with your doctor or pharmacist if any of the following continue or become troublesome.

O xytetracycline side- effects	What can I do if I experience this?
Feeling sick (nausea), tummy (abdominal) pain	Stick to simple foods - avoid fatty or spicy meals
Diarrhoea	Drink plenty of water to replace lost fluids. If this continues or is severe, speak with a doctor
Headache	Drink plenty of water and ask your pharmacist to recommend a suitable painkiller. If the headaches continue, speak with your doctor

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

If you experience any other symptoms which you think may be due to the tablets, speak with your doctor or pharmacist for further advice.

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.

If you experience side effects, you can report them online through the [Yellow Card website](#).

Further reading

- [Manufacturer's PIL, Oxytetracycline Tablets 250 mg](#); Esteve Pharmaceuticals (formerly Intrapharm Laboratories), The electronic Medicines Compendium. Dated June 2022.

- [Medicines Complete BNF 87th Edition](#); British Medical Association and Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain, London.

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