

Griseofulvin for fungal infections

Griseofulvin is prescribed to treat fungal infections.

A course of treatment may last from a few weeks to several months.

Griseofulvin may harm an unborn child – you must avoid getting pregnant or fathering a child.

The most common side-effects are feeling sick (nausea) and diarrhoea.

About griseofulvin

Type of medicine	Antifungal
Used for	Fungal infections
Available as	Tablets and oral liquid medicine

Griseofulvin is a medicine which is used to treat fungal infections. It is mainly prescribed for infections occurring on the skin or scalp. It is prescribed in particular for an infection called [scalp ringworm](#) (also called tinea capitis). It is also used to treat some [nail infections](#), especially when other more frequently prescribed treatments are not suitable for some reason.

Before taking griseofulvin

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 griseofulvin it is important that your doctor knows:

- If you are pregnant, trying for a baby, or breastfeeding.

- If you have problems with the way your liver works.
- If you have an inflammatory condition called systemic lupus erythematosus (SLE). Griseofulvin can make this condition worse.
- If you have a rare inherited blood disorder called porphyria.
- If you have ever had an allergic reaction to a medicine.
- If you, or your partner, are using hormonal methods of contraception ('the pill').
- 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.

How to take griseofulvin

- Before you start this treatment, read the manufacturer's printed information leaflet from inside your pack. The manufacturer's leaflet will give you more information about griseofulvin and a full list of side-effects which you may experience from taking it.
- Take griseofulvin exactly as your doctor tells you to. The usual dose for adults is 500-1000 mg each day. This can often be taken as a single daily dose, although your doctor may recommend that you take it divided into smaller doses spaced throughout the day. Doses for children depend upon the weight of the child. Children may be prescribed low-strength (125 mg) tablets to take, or oral liquid medicine.
- Swallow the tablets whole with a drink of water. It is important that you take your doses of griseofulvin after a meal or snack. This is because the presence of food in your stomach helps your body to absorb the medicine properly.
- If you forget to take a dose, take it as soon as you remember, unless it is nearly time for your next dose, in which case leave out the forgotten dose. Do not take two doses together to make up for a missed one.

Getting the most from your treatment

- Try to keep your regular appointments with your doctor. This is so your doctor can check on your progress. Treatment with griseofulvin may last from a few weeks to several months. It is important that you continue to take it until the infection has completely cleared, and then for a further two weeks afterwards.
- If you drink alcohol, ask your doctor for advice about drinking whilst taking griseofulvin. Griseofulvin can increase the effects of alcohol and may not be recommended for you.
- You must avoid getting pregnant or fathering a child while you are taking griseofulvin. In addition, women should avoid getting pregnant for at least a month after the treatment has finished, and men should avoid fathering a child for at least six months afterwards.
- Make sure you discuss with your doctor which types of contraception are suitable for you and your partner. This is particularly important if you normally rely on hormonal contraception ('the pill'), as griseofulvin reduces its effectiveness.
- If you buy or take any over-the-counter medicines, check with your doctor or a pharmacist that they are suitable for you to take with griseofulvin.
- A few people taking griseofulvin find that their skin becomes more sensitive to sunlight. Protect your skin from bright sunlight until you know how your skin reacts, and do not use sunbeds.
- If you are having an operation or dental treatment, tell the person carrying out the treatment that you are taking griseofulvin.

Can griseofulvin 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 associated with griseofulvin. 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.

Griseofulvin side-effects	What can I do if I experience this?
Feeling sick (nausea) or being sick (vomiting), diarrhoea	Eat simple meals – avoid rich or spicy food. Drink plenty of water to replace lost fluid
Headache	Drink plenty of water and ask your pharmacist to recommend a suitable painkiller. If the headaches continue, speak with your doctor
Feeling sleepy or drowsy	Do not drive and do not use tools or machines until you feel better. Do not drink alcohol

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

How to store griseofulvin

- 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.

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, Griseofulvin 500 mg Tablets](#); Chemidex Pharma Ltd, The electronic Medicines Compendium. Dated September 2019.
- [Medicines Complete BNF 87th Edition](#); British Medical Association and Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain, London.

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