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Levofloxacin tablets for infection (Evoxil)

Levofloxacin is given to treat a bacterial infection.

It is important to complete the full course of treatment. This is to prevent the infection from coming back.

The most common side-effects are feeling sick (nausea) and diarrhoea. They are usually mild and soon pass.

About levofloxacin

Type of medicine	A quinolone antibiotic
Used for	Treating infections
Also called	Evoxil®
Available as	Tablets, eye drops

Levofloxacin is given to treat a bacterial infection. It is useful for treating infections such as sinusitis, [chest infections](#), urine infections, prostatitis, and some skin and soft tissue infections. It works by killing the bacteria which are the cause of the infection.

Other antibiotics are usually prescribed in preference to levofloxacin. Levofloxacin is reserved for infections which have not improved with other antibiotic treatment. It is also used if other, more preferred, antibiotics cannot be prescribed for some reason.

Levofloxacin is also available as eye drops for the treatment of eye infections. For more information on this use see the leaflet [Levofloxacin eye drops](#).

Before taking levofloxacin tablets

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 levofloxacin it is important that your doctor knows:

- If you are pregnant, trying for a baby, or breastfeeding.
- If you are under 18 years of age.
- If you have ever experienced a problem with your tendons, called tendonitis.
- If you have any problems with the way your kidneys work.
- If you have epilepsy or any other condition that causes fits.
- If you have ever had mental health problems.
- If you have a heart condition, or if you have been told you have an unusual heartbeat.
- If you have aortic aneurysm or a family history of aneurysm disease.
- If you have a condition causing tired and weak muscles, called myasthenia gravis.
- If you know you have glucose 6-phosphate dehydrogenase (G6PD) deficiency. This is a genetic disorder which causes problems after eating foods such as fava beans.
- 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. It is particularly important that you tell your doctor if you have had a problem after taking another quinolone antibiotic (these are called norfloxacin, ofloxacin, ciprofloxacin, moxifloxacin, and nalidixic acid).

How to take levofloxacin tablets

- Before you start taking the tablets, read the manufacturer's printed information leaflet from inside the pack. The manufacturer's leaflet will give you more information about levofloxacin and a full list of the side-effects which you may experience from taking it.
- Take levofloxacin exactly as your doctor tells you to. The usual dose is 500 mg daily, although for some types of infection a dose of 250 mg daily is sufficient, and for others, 500 mg twice daily is needed. Read the label carefully to make sure you know what dose is right for you.
- You can take levofloxacin before or after meals. If you are taking one dose a day, it is preferable to take it in the morning. If you are taking more than one dose a day, try to space out your doses – so ideally, take a tablet every 12 hours.
- Many people find it helps to swallow the tablets with a drink of water. You may break the tablets in half along the score line if needed, but do not crush or chew the tablets.
- Do not take indigestion remedies (antacids) or medicines containing iron or zinc (such as multivitamin tablets) during the two hours before you take levofloxacin, or during the two hours after you have taken a dose. This is because these medicines interfere with the way levofloxacin is absorbed by your body, and stop it from working fully.
- If you forget to take a dose, take it as soon as you remember. If when you remember, your next dose is due then take the dose which is due but leave out the forgotten one. Do not take two tablets together to make up for a missed dose.
- Even if you feel your infection has cleared up, keep taking the antibiotic until the course is finished (unless you are told to stop by your doctor). This is to prevent the infection from coming back. A course of treatment usually lasts for 7–14 days. If you still feel unwell after finishing the course of tablets, go back to see your doctor.

Getting the most from your treatment

- Remember to keep any routine appointments with your doctor. This is so your progress can be monitored.

- Levofloxacin may cause your skin to become more sensitive to sunlight than normal. Protect your skin by using a sunscreen, particularly if you are exposed to strong sunlight for a prolonged period of time. Do not use sunbeds.
- If you buy any medicines, check with a pharmacist that they are safe to take with this antibiotic. In particular, do not take painkillers called non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), such as ibuprofen, while you are taking levofloxacin.
- Some people develop thrush (redness and itching in the mouth or vagina) after taking a course of antibiotics. If you think you have thrush, speak with your doctor or pharmacist for advice.
- 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.
- Levofloxacin may make you feel light-headed and impair your ability to concentrate. Make sure your reactions are normal before you drive and before you use tools or machines.
- If you have diabetes, you may need to check your blood sugar (glucose) levels more regularly, as levofloxacin can affect the levels of sugar in your blood.

Can levofloxacin 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 levofloxacin. 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 levofloxacin side-effects (these affect fewer than 1 in 10 people)	What can I do if I experience this?
Feeling sick (nausea) or being sick (vomiting)	Stick to simple foods – avoid rich or spicy meals. It may help to take the tablets after food
Diarrhoea	Drink plenty of water to replace lost fluids. If the diarrhoea is severe or continues to be a problem, speak with your pharmacist or doctor for advice
Headache	Drink plenty of water and ask your pharmacist to recommend a suitable painkiller. If the headaches continue, let your doctor know
Feeling dizzy	Do not drive and do not use tools or machines until you feel well again
Problems sleeping	If troublesome, speak with your doctor
Temporary changes to liver enzymes	This could be noticed if you have certain blood tests

Important: there are also a number of rare but more serious side-effects which have been associated with levofloxacin. Speak with your doctor as soon as possible if you experience the following:

- An allergic-type reaction, such as swelling around your face or mouth, a skin rash, or any difficulty breathing.
- Sudden pain in the abdomen (tummy), chest or back.
- Pain or inflammation in your muscles, tendons or joints (possible tendinopathy).
- Any feelings of pain, burning, tingling, numbness or weakness.

- Any problems with your vision or eyes, or changes to taste, smell or hearing.
- Disordered thinking or thoughts about harming yourself.

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

How to store levofloxacin

- 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.

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

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, Levofloxacin 250 mg and 500 mg Film-coated Tablets](#); Ipca Laboratories UK Ltd, The electronic Medicines Compendium. Dated January 2021.
- [Medicines Complete BNF 88th Edition](#); British Medical Association and Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain, London.

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