

Linezolid for infection (Zyvox)

Linezolid is an antibiotic which is given for serious infections. It will be prescribed by a specialist doctor.

The dose is 600 mg every 12 hours. This will be as an injection, or as a tablet or liquid medicine.

While you are taking linezolid, try to avoid eating mature cheese, yeast extracts (eg, Marmite®, Bovril®) or soya bean products such as soy sauce. These foods interact with linezolid and cause unpleasant symptoms.

About linezolid

Type of medicine	An oxazolidinone antibiotic
Used for	Treatment of pneumonia; difficult-to-treat skin infections
Also called	Zyvox®
Available as	Tablets, oral liquid medicine, and injection

Linezolid is an antibiotic which is used for serious infections which are difficult to treat with other antibiotics.

It is used to treat [pneumonia](#), which is a serious lung infection. It is also used to treat skin and soft tissue infections caused by [infection with MRSA bacteria](#). These types of bacteria are resistant to treatment with many other antibiotics. Treatment is started in hospital, often as an injection given directly into a vein. As your treatment progresses, you may be given tablets or liquid medicine to take instead of having injections.

Before taking linezolid

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 linezolid it is important that your doctor knows:

- If you are taking any other medicines. It is **very** important that you tell your doctor about **all** the medicines that have been prescribed for you, as well as any medicines that you have bought without a prescription or herbal and complementary medicines. This is because linezolid must not be taken at the same time as some other medicines. These include some medicines for depression, 'triptans' for migraine, some painkillers, and decongestant medicines which are often included in cold and flu remedies.
- If you are pregnant or breastfeeding.
- If you have any problems with the way your liver works, or the way your kidneys work.
- If you have high blood pressure (hypertension).
- If you have an overactive thyroid gland.
- If you have ever had a fit (seizure).
- If you have schizophrenia or bipolar depression.
- If you have been told you have a carcinoid tumour (a rare tumour of the hormone system), or a tumour on your adrenal glands, called phaeochromocytoma.
- If you have ever had an allergic reaction to a medicine.

How to take linezolid

- Ask to read the manufacturer's printed information leaflet. It will give you more information about linezolid and will provide a full list of the side-effects which you may experience from taking it. Your doctor may also give you some additional printed information – it is important that you read all the information you are given.

- Take linezolid exactly as your doctor tells you to. You will be asked to take two doses each day, 12 hours apart. This will usually mean taking a dose each morning and evening. You can take linezolid before or after meals.
- If you have been given the oral liquid medicine, do not shake the bottle. Instead, turn the bottle upside down a few times before you remove the lid and pour out your dose.
- Try to remember to take your doses at the correct times, and not to miss any. If you do forget to take a dose, take it as soon as you remember and then take the next dose 12 hours afterwards. Continue to take a dose every 12 hours. Do not take two doses together to make up for a forgotten dose.
- It is usual for a course of treatment to last for 10-14 days. Even if you feel your infection has cleared up, keep taking the antibiotic until the course has finished (unless your doctor tells you otherwise). This is to prevent the infection from coming back and being more difficult to treat.

Getting the most from your treatment

- Linezolid can react with a substance called tyramine which is contained in foods such as mature cheese, yeast extracts (eg, Marmite®, Bovril®), and soya bean products (eg, soy sauce). While you are taking linezolid, avoid eating any of these, as they will cause an increase in your blood pressure. Also, avoid drinking alcohol, especially draught beers.
- Keep the scheduled appointments with your doctor so that your progress can be monitored. You will need to have a blood test each week while you are taking this antibiotic.
- Some people develop thrush (redness and itchiness in the mouth or vagina) after taking a course of antibiotics. If this happens to you, speak with your doctor or pharmacist for advice.
- Do not buy or take any medicines without checking first with your doctor or a pharmacist that they are suitable for you to take with this antibiotic.
- If you are due to have any other medical treatment, tell the person carrying out the treatment that you are taking this antibiotic.

- 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 linezolid 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 linezolid. 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 linezolid side-effects (these affect fewer than 1 in 10 people)	What can I do if I experience this?
Headache	If the headache is severe and occurs after eating food, speak with your doctor straightaway
Diarrhoea	Drink plenty of water to replace lost fluids. If the diarrhoea is severe, speak with your doctor straightaway
Feeling sick (nausea) or being sick (vomiting)	Stick to simple meals - avoid rich or spicy foods
Metallic taste in the mouth	Try taking your doses with some food or a drink to take away the taste
Changes to some blood tests	Your doctor will ask you to have regular blood tests to check for this

Important: your doctor will discuss with you the possibility of some less common side-effects occurring. You must let your doctor know straightaway about the following:

- Any changes in your eyesight, such as blurred vision or colour changes.
- If you develop a throbbing headache after eating or drinking something.

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

How to store linezolid

- Keep all medicines out of the reach and sight of children.
- Store in a cool, dry place, away from direct heat and light.
- If you have been given liquid medicine, it will have been made up by the pharmacy and it lasts for a limited number of days only. Check the expiry date on the bottle and do not use it after this date.

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.

Report suspected side effects to medicines, vaccines, e-cigarettes, medical device incidents, defective or falsified (fake) products to the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency to ensure safe and effective use.

Further reading

- [Manufacturer's PIL, Zyvox® 600 mg Film-coated Tablets](#); Pfizer Limited, The electronic Medicines Compendium. Dated October 2020.
- [Manufacturer's PIL, Zyvox® 100 mg/5 ml Granules for Oral Suspension](#); Pfizer Limited, The electronic Medicines Compendium. Dated November 2019.
- [Medicines Complete BNF 87th Edition](#); British Medical Association and Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain, London.

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Authored by:	Peer Reviewed by: Sid Dajani	
Originally Published: 20/11/2023	Next review date: 29/05/2023	Document ID: doc_3720

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