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Doxycycline tablets and capsules (Periostat, Vibramycin-D)

Take doxycycline with plenty of water. Stand or sit up to take your doses - this will stop the capsules/tablets from causing any irritation to your throat.

Make sure you continue to take the medicine until you finish the full course prescribed.

Do not take indigestion remedies, or supplements containing iron, magnesium, or zinc at the same time as doxycycline as they stop it from working properly.

About doxycycline

Type of medicine	A tetracycline antibiotic
Used for	Bacterial infections; to prevent malaria
Also called (UK)	Efracea®; Periostat®; Vibramycin-D®
Also called (USA)	Doryx®; Mondoxyne®; Monodox®; Okebo®; Oracea®; Targadox®; Vibramycin®
Available as	Capsules, modified-release capsules, dispersible tablets; oral liquid medicine (USA)

Doxycycline is an antibacterial medicine. This means that it stops infections caused by germs (bacteria). It is given as a treatment for a number of different types of infection, including chest infections, some skin conditions, [sexually transmitted infections](#), and infections in or around the mouth.

Doxycycline is also used to prevent people from getting [malaria](#) when they travel to countries where malaria occurs. Although doxycycline can only be obtained on a prescription from a doctor, it is not prescribable on the NHS to prevent malaria. This means that you will be given a private (non-NHS) prescription and you will be asked to pay the full price for the tablets/capsules if you are taking it for this reason.

Because doxycycline can be given for so many different reasons, it is important that you know why your doctor is prescribing it for you. You will be prescribed a brand of doxycycline that is appropriate for your need, as not all brands are suitable for all of these indications.

Before taking doxycycline

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 doxycycline it is important that your doctor or pharmacist knows:

- If you are pregnant, trying for a baby or breastfeeding.
- 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).
- If you have a condition causing muscle weakness, called myasthenia gravis.
- If you are taking any other medicines. This includes any medicines 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 doxycycline

- Before you start the treatment, read the manufacturer's printed information leaflet from inside the pack. It will give you more information about doxycycline, and will also provide you with a full list of the side-effects which you could experience from taking it.
- There are a number of different brands and strengths of doxycycline so it is important that you take doxycycline exactly as your doctor tells you to. It is likely you will be asked to take one dose a day, although some people will be asked to take two doses a day. If you have a problem with ulcers in your mouth, you could be asked to take four doses a day. How many doses you are asked to take will depend upon the reason for you taking it and the severity of the infection. Your doctor will tell you what dose is right for you, and this information will also be printed on the label of the pack to remind you about what the doctor said to you.
- If you have been given capsules to take, you must swallow these whole (do not open or chew them). Take them during a mealtime, with a glassful of water to make sure you have swallowed them properly. Make sure that you take them while you are sitting or standing up so that they do not get caught in your throat and cause irritation. This also means that you should not take them immediately before you go to bed.
- If you have been given dispersible tablets (Vibramycin-D®), you should stir these into a small glass of water to take them. If you are using the dispersible tablets because of recurrent mouth ulcers, rinse the solution around your mouth for 2-3 minutes, and then spit it out.
- 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 at the same time to make up for a missed dose.
- Depending on what you are being treated for, your course of treatment could last from a week, to several months. Keep taking doxycycline until the course is finished unless you are told to stop sooner by a doctor.

Getting the most from your treatment

- Do not take indigestion remedies, or supplements containing iron, magnesium, or zinc at the same time as you take doxycycline. This is because doxycycline combines with these things, which makes it less effective in fighting infection. If you need to take an antacid or any such supplement, make sure you do not take it within two hours (either before or after) of taking doxycycline.
- Doxycycline may cause your skin to become more sensitive to sunlight than usual. Avoid strong sunlight and do not use sunbeds. Use a sun cream with a high sun protection factor on bright days, even when it is cloudy.
- 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.

Additional information for protection against malaria

- If you are taking doxycycline to protect against malaria, you must start taking it 1-2 days before you travel. This is to ensure there is sufficient medicine in your bloodstream to give you the required protection. You should continue to take it throughout your stay and for a further four weeks after you have left the area.
- If you feel ill or develop a high temperature (fever) or flu-like symptoms while you are travelling or within one year (especially if it is within three months) of returning home, you should see your doctor straightaway. This is important, even if you have taken your antimalarial tablets correctly.

- Doxycycline will help reduce the risk of you getting malaria, but it is also important that you take the following precautions against being bitten by mosquitoes:
 - Cover up bare areas of your arms and legs with long-sleeved, loose-fitting clothing, long trousers and socks. This is especially important if you are outside after sunset, as this is when mosquitoes feed.
 - Use an effective insect repellent spray on your clothing and any area of your skin which is bare. If you are also using a sunscreen, apply the sunscreen first and the insect repellent afterwards.
 - Spray the room with an insecticide each evening a couple of hours before you go to bed. Check your sleeping areas for mosquitoes – pay particular attention to furniture and areas under your bed where insects can hide.
 - If you are sleeping in an unscreened room, use a mosquito net impregnated with an insecticide.

Can doxycycline 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 doxycycline. You will find a full list in the manufacturer's information leaflet supplied with your medicine. Speak with your doctor or pharmacist if any of the following continue or become troublesome.

Doxycycline side-effects	What can I do if I experience this?
Stomach upset, indigestion, tummy (abdominal) pain	Stick to simple foods – avoid fatty or spicy meals. Take your doses after a meal or with a snack
Diarrhoea	Drink plenty of water to replace lost fluids. If this continues or is severe, speak with a doctor
Headache, other aches and pains	Drink plenty of water and ask a pharmacist to recommend a suitable painkiller. If the aches continue, let your doctor know
A yeast infection (thrush) which causes redness and itchiness in the mouth or vagina	Speak with a doctor or pharmacist for advice
Dry mouth, throat irritation	Remember to take your doses with a large glass of water while you are standing or sitting upright
Feeling anxious, increased sweating	If troublesome, speak with a doctor

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

In rare cases, treatment with tetracycline antibiotics such as doxycycline can cause an increase in blood pressure inside the skull. This can cause symptoms such as headache, being sick (vomiting) and vision problems such as blurred or double vision or loss of vision. If this happens to you, seek medical attention and do not take any more doxycycline.

If you experience any other symptoms which you think may be due to the medicine, discuss them with your doctor or pharmacist who will be able to advise you further.

How to store doxycycline

- 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 any 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, Doxycycline 50 mg and 100 mg capsules](#); Accord-UK Ltd, The electronic Medicines Compendium. Dated October 2020.
- [Medicines Complete BNF 87th Edition](#); British Medical Association and Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain, London.

- [Manufacturer's PIL, Vibramycin-D Dispersible Tablets 100 mg](#); Pfizer Ltd, The electronic Medicines Compendium. Dated November 2019.

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