

Your medication



Phenytoin (Dilantin)

Why do I need this medicine?

Phenytoin helps **control convulsions** or seizures. Your doctor may want you to take it as a capsule, tablet, or liquid.

How do I take this medicine?

1. Take this medicine just like your doctor told you. **Do not stop** taking phenytoin unless the doctor tells you to stop.
2. Take this medicine with food or milk. This might keep you from getting an upset stomach.
3. If you are taking the liquid, **shake the bottle well** before using. Make sure you use the correct spoon. Kitchen spoons may not be equal and you may not get the right amount of medicine.

What common side effects may I have?

1. This medicine may cause you to become dizzy or sleepy. **These side effects usually go away** the longer you take the medicine. See how you feel after taking the first dose. If you are sleepy or dizzy stand up slowly after you have been sitting or lying down. If you are dizzy or sleepy, **do not** drive or do other jobs when you need to be alert.
2. Taking phenytoin may make your gums soft and swollen. You can help keep your gums healthy by **taking good care of your mouth**, brushing your teeth after you eat with a soft bristled toothbrush, and gently rubbing your gums with the toothbrush.

What special things do I need to know?

1. Never **suddenly** stop taking the phenytoin unless your doctor tells you to. Stopping the phenytoin suddenly may cause you to have a seizure.

(over)

2. **Do not** drink alcohol while you are taking this medicine. Beer, wine, or hard liquor may make you more dizzy or sleepy. Drinking alcohol can cause you to have seizures.

Call your doctor if you:

- **get a rash**
- feel dizzy or sleepy
- feel different than usual
- have trouble walking
- have double vision

3. **Diabetics:** this medicine may make your blood or urine sugar go up. Talk to your doctor if your blood or urine is hard to control.
4. Before you have medical or dental treatments, emergency care or surgery, tell your doctor or dentist that you are taking this medicine.
5. Do not take other medicines without talking to your doctor.
6. Keep all medicine out of the reach of children. Even a small amount of this medicine may make a child very sick or cause death. Keep all your medicines in a safe place where children cannot get them.
7. If you are pregnant, planning to become pregnant, or breast-feeding, tell your doctor **before** you take this medicine. **This medicine may have harmful effects on unborn babies.** If you are not using birth control, be sure and tell your doctor.
8. This medicine may change the way the birth control pill works and you may get pregnant. Ask your doctor about another method of birth control.
9. **Do not** share this medicine with anyone.
10. Make sure to **keep your appointments** for doctor visits and blood tests.
11. Tell your doctor if you are **allergic to any medicine.**
12. All medicines can cause side effects. Usually, these side effects will get better after a few days. If they do not, you should tell your doctor. The doctor can make some changes in the medicine. **Do not** stop taking the medicine unless the doctor tells you to. Side effects **do not** mean that you are allergic to the medicine.