



Doxycycline Fact Sheet

What is doxycycline?

Doxycycline belongs to a class of drugs called tetracycline antibiotics. It is approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to treat and protect people who have been exposed to plague bacteria. Doxycycline is usually prescribed as a 100 mg oral tablet or as an oral suspension for children.

How to take doxycycline?

Adults: Take 1 tablet every 12 hours as directed. Each person should take all the pills in their bottle.

Children: A child's dose depends on body weight. Give the medication to your child as directed on additional dosing documentation.

Take doxycycline with food and at least one full glass of water. Avoid taking antacids (like Tums or Maalox), cholestyramine (Questran), colestipol (Colestid), dairy products (like milk or yogurt) or vitamins 3 hours before or after taking doxycycline.

Doxycycline dosing in a Plague Attack:

A 7 day course will be provided to all individuals who may have been exposed to plague.

What to do if you miss a dose?

If you miss a dose, start taking one tablet every 12 hours. Do not take 2 pills to make up for the missed dose. Finish all your pills, even if you feel okay, unless your doctor tells you to stop. If you stop taking the medicine too soon, you may become ill.

Side effects of doxycycline?

Common side effects of doxycycline include an upset stomach, vomiting, or diarrhea. If you have problems with any of these symptoms, tell your doctor. Less common side effects include dark urine, yellowing of the eyes or skin, sore throat, fever, unusual bleeding or bruising, fatigue, white patches in the mouth. If any of these symptoms occur, call your doctor right away. **Severe allergic reactions are very rare.** Signs of an allergic reaction include rash, itching, swelling of the tongue, hands or feet, fever, or trouble breathing. If any of these symptoms occur, call your doctor right away.

Special note for children: This medicine may cause staining of the teeth in children younger than 8 years old. This means that their teeth can become grayish in color and this color does not go away. This medicine can also cause bone growth delay in premature infants but this side effect goes away after the medicine is finished.

Special note for pregnant women: There is little data about side effects from the use of this drug during pregnancy. If a mother of an unborn baby takes doxycycline, staining of baby teeth or poor bone development can result. There is a remote chance of severe liver damage in some pregnant women.

Precautions:

- Be sure to tell the doctor if you are allergic to any medicine
- It is very important to tell your doctor about ALL of the medicine you are currently taking even pills that were bought at the store such as vitamins and antacids.
- Doxycycline can make skin very sensitive to the sun which increases the chance of getting severe sunburn. Avoid sun as much as possible. When outside, wear long sleeve shirt and hat and always apply sunscreen (30 SPF).
- Birth control pills may not work as well when taking this medication. Be sure to use condoms or another form of birth control until you are finished with the entire course of treatment. If you are pregnant or breastfeeding, tell your doctor.
- In women, doxycycline can cause vaginal itching and discharge known as a yeast infection. Tell your doctor if this occurs.
- Tell the doctor if you have ever had problems with your liver or kidneys, or if you have frequent heartburn.

For further information, contact the Oklahoma City-County Health Department at (405) 425-4437