

## ***About your medication***

### **DILTIAZEM**

(CARDIZEM® , VASOCARDOL® ,  
CORDIS® , DILZEM® , DILTAHEXAL ®  
60mg tablets  
CARDIZEM CD® , VASOCARDOL CD® ,  
DILZEM CD ® ,  
180mg , 240mg , 360mg controlled  
release capsules)

*Other brands may be available*

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## WHAT IS DILTIAZEM?

Diltiazem belongs to a group of medicines called calcium channel blockers. It is only available on a doctor's prescription.

## WHAT IS IT FOR?

Diltiazem helps to reduce blood pressure by relaxing and widening blood vessels. It also helps the heart to pump more effectively. It is also sometimes used to increase cyclosporin levels.

## HOW TO TAKE THIS MEDICINE

Give the medicine as ordered by the doctor. Diltiazem can be given in a tablet or capsule form. The tablets and capsules are not interchangeable; do not use both.

The tablets should be taken on an empty stomach, about half to one hour before food. If necessary, the tablets can be crushed or cut. The capsules are made so that there is slow release of the drug. These capsules should be swallowed whole. However, the beads may be removed from inside capsules to separate smaller daily doses. Please ask your pharmacist about doing this.

It is important that the exact dose ordered is given to ensure your child receives the full benefit of the drug. This medicine must not be given to other people.

Diltiazem is used to treat long-term conditions such as high blood pressure, but does not cure it. Therefore diltiazem must be given every day. Do not discontinue this medicine without speaking to your doctor first.

If your child vomits the medicine immediately after giving it, you can safely repeat the dose. Do not repeat the dose if there is an interval of greater than 20 minutes between when the drug was given and when your child was vomiting. Please consult your doctor if vomiting persists.

## WHAT TO DO IF A DOSE IS MISSED

If you miss a dose of the medicine it can be given as soon as you remember. If it is almost time for your child's next dose, skip the dose you missed and give the next normal dose when you are meant to. **Do not give a double dose.**

## STORING THE MEDICINE

It is important to keep diltiazem locked away out of the reach of children. Do not keep the tablets or capsules in the bathroom, near the kitchen sink or in other damp, warm places because this may make them less effective. Store in a cool, dry place, away from heat and direct light.

## USE OF OTHER MEDICINES

Care must be taken when using diltiazem with some other medicines. Check with your child's doctor or pharmacist before giving any prescription medicine or medicine purchased without prescription from a pharmacy, supermarket, or health food shop. This is important for

- other medicines used to treat high blood pressure
- cyclosporin, tacrolimus
- medicines for the heart such as beta blockers, digoxin or amiodarone
- cimetidine
- rifampicin
- carbamazepine

This list is not complete. Talk to your doctor or pharmacist about possible interactions with any over-the-counter or complementary medicines or recreational substances (e.g. alcohol).

### **IMPORTANT INFORMATION**

- Make sure your child drinks enough water during exercise and hot weather whilst taking diltiazem; this is because the blood pressure may drop suddenly.
- Your doctor may occasionally do a blood test to see how your child's kidneys and liver are working.

### **POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS**

Side effects can occur while taking diltiazem. Some of these are not serious and will go away with time or after the dose has been changed. Others are more serious and require you to check with your doctor.

#### **Less serious side effects include:**

- Runny or stuffy nose
- Stomach discomfort
- Light-headedness or dizziness\*
- Constipation

\*Diltiazem can cause dizziness, light-headedness or fainting, especially when rising from a lying or sitting position. Getting up slowly when getting out of bed or standing up may help.

**More Serious** (Contact doctor *as soon as possible* if any of the following occur):

- Fast, slow, irregular, or pounding heartbeat
- Unusual tiredness or weakness

**Allergic reaction** (Stop medicine and see doctor immediately):

- Skin rash, itching or hives, swollen mouth or lips, wheezing or difficulty breathing

**IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS CONTACT**



***Your Child's Doctor via the RCH Switchboard  
on 03 9345 5522***

**OR**

***Pharmacy Department on 03 9345 5492  
IN CASE OF POISONING OR OVERDOSE CONTACT  
POISONS INFORMATION CENTRE 13 11 26  
(24 hour service)***

This leaflet answers some common questions about your child's medicine. It does not contain all available information. It does not take the place of talking to your child's doctor or pharmacist. The leaflet may differ from information in the manufacturer's Consumer Medicine Information. The information in this leaflet reflects the usage of medicine under medical supervision by patients of The Royal Children's Hospital. Medicine may be used in children in different ways or for different reasons than in adults - for more information see the leaflet "[Medicines for Children](#)". This leaflet includes information current at the time of review of the document – OCTOBER 2010.

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