

***About your medication***

**HYDROCHLOROTHIAZIDE**

(DITHIAZIDE®)

*Other brands may be available*

---

## WHAT IS HYDROCHLOROTHIAZIDE?

Hydrochlorothiazide belongs to a group of medications known as thiazide diuretics; it is a medication which causes increased volume of urine. It is only available with a doctor's prescription.

## WHAT IS IT FOR?

It is used to help relieve fluid retention (oedema) and also to lower blood pressure. It does this by making your child go to the toilet more often, and passing more urine. Sometimes it is used to treat high calcium levels in the blood.

## HOW TO TAKE THIS MEDICINE

It is important that this medication is taken only as directed and not given to other people.

Take this medicine exactly as your doctor ordered. Even if your child feels fine their fluid retention or high blood pressure may still need treatment.

If your child is no longer in nappies, to avoid going to the toilet too often during the night, the hydrochlorothiazide can be given in the morning. If more than one dose a day is required, give the last dose before 6 p.m. (unless your child's doctor tells you differently).

Hydrochlorothiazide may be taken on an empty stomach or with a meal. Tablets may be crushed for swallowing.

Salt levels in the blood may need to be checked regularly depending upon other medication or the dosage your child is on.

## WHAT TO DO IF A DOSE IS MISSED

If you miss a dose of the medication it can be taken as soon as you remember. Do not take the missed dose if it is close to the next one; just take the next dose as normal. **Do not double up on any doses.**

## STORING THE MEDICINE

It is important to keep hydrochlorothiazide locked away out of the reach of children.

Do not keep the tablets in the bathroom, near the kitchen sink or in other damp, warm places because this may make it less effective.

## USE OF OTHER MEDICINES

Care must be taken when using hydrochlorothiazide with some other medications. Check with your doctor or pharmacist before using any other medications including those you buy without a prescription from the pharmacy, supermarket or health food shop. This is important for the following medications:

- lithium or digoxin
-

- muscle relaxants or anaesthetics
- some medicines for arthritis or pain
- blood sugar lowering drugs
- other blood pressure lowering drugs
- corticosteroids
- other diuretics
- anti-cancer medications
- warfarin.

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**

- Dizziness or fainting may occur especially when your child gets up from a lying or sitting position. This is due to a drop in blood pressure when rising. Getting up slowly may help.
- Some people taking hydrochlorothiazide are more sensitive to sunlight than they are normally. Adequate skin protection is necessary using at least SPF 15 sunscreen and protective clothing.
- Do not suddenly stop taking this medicine without first checking with your doctor.
- Do not take this medication if you have had an allergy to 'sulpha' drugs (sulphonamides) in the past.

### **POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS**

Side effects are uncommon in most patients, and usually depend on the dose needed. They may disappear 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:**

- fatigue, dizziness or weakness
- diarrhoea or constipation
- headache
- nausea, poor appetite, or upset stomach
- thirst or dry mouth

#### **More serious** (contact your doctor as soon as possible if any of the following occur):

- exhaustion or muscle weakness
- very frequent urination or constipation
- unexplained fever or sore throat
- abnormal bleeding or bruising
- persistent infection
- fast heart beat
- jaundice – yellowing of the skin and eyes
- dehydration

#### **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.

---