

About your medication

DIGOXIN

(LANOXIN®)

62.5mcg, 250mcg tablets

50mcg/mL paediatric elixir)

Other brands are available, but should not be interchanged

WHAT IS DIGOXIN?

Digoxin is a medicine known as a cardiac glycoside. It is only available with a doctor's prescription.

WHAT IS IT FOR?

Digoxin is used to treat certain types of irregular heartbeats (arrhythmia) and weakness of the heart (heart failure). Your child's heart will function correctly as the heart rate is slowed down and the heartbeats are strengthened.

HOW TO TAKE THIS MEDICINE

The dose of digoxin has been adjusted to suit your child. It is important to measure each dose accurately, as there is little difference between a safe dose and an overdose. Doses are usually small. You will be supplied with an oral syringe for measuring the dose.

- Digoxin should be taken at the same time each day, preferably before food/feeds to achieve better absorption of the medicine. However if nausea occurs it can be avoided if the medicine is given with food
- Do not stop taking this medicine suddenly without first checking with the doctor
- If using the elixir, do not dilute with any other liquid
- Tablets should be swallowed with a glass of water

WHAT TO DO IF A DOSE IS MISSED

If you miss a dose:

- Give the missed dose as soon as possible.
- Skip the missed dose if you are more than 12 hours late and give the next dose at the normal time.
- Consult your child's doctor if doses are missed for 2 or more days.

Do not double-up on any doses.

STORING THE MEDICINE

It is important to keep digoxin locked away out of the reach of children. Do not keep the medicine 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.

The mixture comes in a bottle with a child resistant lid and the dose should not be removed from this bottle until the dose is needed.

USE OF OTHER MEDICINES

Care must be taken when using digoxin 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

- Some medicines used for colds and flu's - may increase the risk of heart rhythm problems
- phenytoin - a medicine used to control epilepsy
- some antibiotics (e.g. erythromycin, tetracycline, rifampicin)
- St John's Wort, an ingredient in many medicines that you can buy without a prescription from a pharmacy, health food shop or supermarket.

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

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- Your child's doctor may want you to check your child's pulse rate before each dose and may ask you to call if the pulse rate is out of range
- Blood tests may have to be taken to ensure the medicine is given at the best dose. Be sure to keep all appointments

POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS

Side effects can occur while taking digoxin. 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:

- headaches
- the faeces may appear black in colour

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

- irregular heartbeat or fainting
- trouble breathing
- unusual weakness or drowsiness or confusion
- bleeding or bruising more easily than normal
- nausea, appetite loss or diarrhoea

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.
