Chloral Hydrate

This information from Lexicomp® explains what you need to know about this medication, including what it’s used for, how to take it, its side effects, and when to call your healthcare provider.

Brand Names: Canada
Chloral Hydrate Odan; PMS-Chloral Hydrate

What is this drug used for?

- It is used to calm a child before a procedure.
- It is used to treat sleep problems.
- It may be given to your child for other reasons. Talk with the doctor.

What do I need to tell the doctor BEFORE my child takes this drug?

- If your child is allergic to this drug; any part of this drug; or any other drugs, foods, or substances. Tell the doctor about the allergy and what signs your child had.
- If your child has any of these health problems: Kidney disease, liver disease, esophagus problems, or stomach or bowel
problems like swelling, ulcers, or irritation.

- If your child has heart problems.

This is not a list of all drugs or health problems that interact with this drug.

Tell the doctor and pharmacist about all of your child’s drugs (prescription or OTC, natural products, vitamins) and health problems. You must check to make sure that it is safe to give this drug with all of your child’s other drugs and health problems. Do not start, stop, or change the dose of any drug your child takes without checking with the doctor.

**What are some things I need to know or do while my child takes this drug?**

- Tell all of your child’s health care providers that your child is taking this drug. This includes your child’s doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and dentists.
- This drug may be habit-forming with long-term use.
- When sleep drugs are used nightly for more than a few weeks, they may not work as well to help your child sleep. This is known as tolerance. Only give your child sleep drugs for a short time. If your child’s sleep problems last, call the doctor.
- If your child has been taking this drug on a regular basis and stops taking it all of a sudden, your child may have signs of withdrawal. Do not stop giving this drug all of a sudden.
without calling the doctor. Tell the doctor if your child has any bad effects.

- Have your child avoid tasks or actions that call for alertness until you see how this drug affects your child. These are things like riding a bike, playing sports, or using items such as scissors, lawnmowers, electric scooters, toy cars, or motorized vehicles. Your child may still feel sleepy the day after taking this drug. Have your child avoid these tasks or actions until your child feels fully awake.

- Alcohol may interact with this drug. Be sure your child does not drink alcohol.

- Talk with your child’s doctor before your child uses marijuana, other forms of cannabis, or prescription or OTC drugs that may slow your child’s actions.

- This drug may affect certain lab tests. Tell all of your child’s health care providers and lab workers that your child takes this drug.

- Use with care in children. Talk with the doctor.

**If your child is pregnant or breast-feeding a baby:**

- Talk with the doctor if your child is pregnant, becomes pregnant, or is breast-feeding a baby. You will need to talk about the benefits and risks to your child and the baby.

**What are some side effects that I need to call my child’s**
doctor about right away?

**WARNING/CAUTION:** Even though it may be rare, some people may have very bad and sometimes deadly side effects when taking a drug. Tell your child’s doctor or get medical help right away if your child has any of the following signs or symptoms that may be related to a very bad side effect:

- Signs of an allergic reaction, like rash; hives; itching; red, swollen, blistered, or peeling skin with or without fever; wheezing; tightness in the chest or throat; trouble breathing, swallowing, or talking; unusual hoarseness; or swelling of the mouth, face, lips, tongue, or throat.
- Very bad belly pain.
- Feeling confused.
- Change in how your child acts.
- Fever, chills, or sore throat.
- Very bad dizziness or passing out.
- A heartbeat that does not feel normal.
- Trouble breathing, slow breathing, or shallow breathing.
- Some people have done certain tasks or actions while they were not fully awake like driving, and making and eating food. Most of the time, people do not remember doing these things. Tell the doctor if this happens to your child.

**What are some other side effects of this drug?**
All drugs may cause side effects. However, many people have no side effects or only have minor side effects. Call your child’s doctor or get medical help if any of these side effects or any other side effects bother your child or do not go away:

- Feeling sleepy the next day.
- Upset stomach or throwing up.
- Gas.
- Diarrhea.
- Bad taste in your child’s mouth.

These are not all of the side effects that may occur. If you have questions about side effects, call your child’s doctor. Call your child’s doctor for medical advice about side effects.

You may report side effects to your national health agency.

**How is this drug best given?**

Give this drug as ordered by your child’s doctor. Read all information given to you. Follow all instructions closely.

**All products:**

- Give this drug with or without food.
- Give this drug with a full glass of water.

**Capsules:**
• Have your child swallow whole. Do not let your child chew, break, or crush.

Liquid:

• Measure liquid doses carefully. Use the measuring device that comes with this drug. If there is none, ask the pharmacist for a device to measure this drug.

• Mix the liquid with water, infant formula, fruit juice, or ginger ale to make it taste better.

For sleep:

• If you are giving this drug to help your child sleep, give it 15 to 30 minutes before bedtime.

• Do not give this drug unless your child can get a full night’s sleep (at least 7 to 8 hours) before needing to be active again.

What do I do if my child misses a dose?

For sleep:

• If your child takes this drug on a regular basis, give a missed dose as soon as you think about it.

• If your child will not be able to get a full night’s sleep (at least 7 hours) after taking the missed dose, skip the missed dose and go back to your child’s normal time.

• Do not give 2 doses at the same time or extra doses.
• Many times this drug is given on an as needed basis. Do not give to your child more often than told by the doctor.

**Before surgery:**

• Call your child’s doctor to find out what to do.

**How do I store and/or throw out this drug?**

• Store at room temperature. Do not freeze.

• Protect from light.

• Store in a dry place. Do not store in a bathroom.

• Store this drug in a safe place where children cannot see or reach it, and where other people cannot get to it. A locked box or area may help keep this drug safe. Keep all drugs away from pets.

• Throw away unused or expired drugs. Do not flush down a toilet or pour down a drain unless you are told to do so. Check with your pharmacist if you have questions about the best way to throw out drugs. There may be drug take-back programs in your area.

**General drug facts**

• If your child’s symptoms or health problems do not get better or if they become worse, call your child’s doctor.

• Do not share your child’s drug with others and do not give
anyone else’s drug to your child.

- Some drugs may have another patient information leaflet. If you have any questions about this drug, please talk with your child’s doctor, nurse, pharmacist, or other health care provider.

- If you think there has been an overdose, call your poison control center or get medical care right away. Be ready to tell or show what was taken, how much, and when it happened.

**Consumer Information Use and Disclaimer**

This information should not be used to decide whether or not to take this medicine or any other medicine. Only the healthcare provider has the knowledge and training to decide which medicines are right for a specific patient. This information does not endorse any medicine as safe, effective, or approved for treating any patient or health condition. This is only a brief summary of general information about this medicine. It does NOT include all information about the possible uses, directions, warnings, precautions, interactions, adverse effects, or risks that may apply to this medicine. This information is not specific medical advice and does not replace information you receive from the healthcare provider. You must talk with the healthcare provider for complete information about the risks and benefits of using this medicine.

**Last Reviewed Date**
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