
PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Dextroamphetamine

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: US

Dexedrine; ProCentra; Zenzedi

Brand Names: Canada

ACT Dextroamphetamine SR; Dexedrine

Warning

- This drug has a risk of abuse and misuse. This drug may also be habit-forming if taken for a long time. Do not give for longer than you have been told by the doctor. Give only as you were told. Tell the doctor if your child has ever abused or been addicted to any drugs or alcohol. Misuse of this drug may cause heart-related side effects or even sudden death.

What is this drug used for?

- It is used to treat attention deficit problems with hyperactivity.

- It is used to treat narcolepsy.
- 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 or a family member has any of these health problems: Blood vessel disease, high blood pressure, heart structure problems or other heart problems, or Tourette's syndrome or tics.
- If your child has any of these health problems: Glaucoma, agitation, anxiety, or overactive thyroid.
- If your child has ever had any of these health problems: Drug abuse or stroke.
- If your child is taking any of these drugs: Acetazolamide or sodium bicarbonate.
- If your child has taken certain drugs for depression or certain other health problems in the last 14 days. This includes isocarboxazid, phenelzine, or tranylcypromine. Very high blood pressure may happen.
- If your child is taking any of these drugs: Linezolid or

methylene blue.

If your child is breast-feeding a baby:

- Be sure your child does not breast-feed a baby while taking this drug.

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.
- 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.

- If your child has been taking this drug for a long time or at high doses, it may not work as well and your child may need higher doses to get the same effect. This is known as tolerance. Call the doctor if this drug stops working well. Do not give more than ordered.
- If your child has been taking this drug for many weeks, talk with your child's doctor before stopping. You may want to slowly stop this drug.
- Your child may need to have some heart tests before starting this drug. If you have questions, talk with your child's doctor.
- This drug may cause high blood pressure.
- Have your child's blood pressure and heart rate checked often.
- Talk with the doctor before giving your child OTC products that may raise blood pressure. These include cough or cold drugs, diet pills, stimulants, non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) like ibuprofen or naproxen, and some natural products or aids.
- 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.
- This drug may raise the chance of seizures in some people, including people who have had seizures in the past. Talk to the doctor to see if your child has a greater chance of seizures while taking this drug.

- Different brands of this drug may have different doses for children. Talk with the doctor before giving this drug to a child.
- This drug may affect growth in children and teens in some cases. They may need regular growth checks. Talk with the doctor.

If your child is pregnant:

- Tell the doctor if your child is pregnant or becomes pregnant. You will need to talk about the benefits and risks of your child using this drug while pregnant.

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.
- Signs of high blood pressure like very bad headache or

dizziness, passing out, or change in eyesight.

- Restlessness.
- Shakiness.
- Trouble controlling body movements.
- Change in eyesight.
- Seizures.
- Muscle pain or weakness, dark urine, or trouble passing urine.
- Erections (hard penis) that happen often or that last a long time.
- Change in color of hands or feet from pale to blue or red.
- Numbness, pain, tingling, or cold feeling of the hands or feet.
- Any sores or wounds on the fingers or toes.
- Sudden deaths have happened with this drug in children with some heart problems or heart defects. Stroke, heart attack, and sudden death have also happened in adults taking this drug. Call your child's doctor right away if your child has a fast, slow, or abnormal heartbeat; weakness on 1 side of the body; trouble speaking or thinking; change in balance; drooping on 1 side of the face; change in eyesight; chest pain or pressure; shortness of breath; or severe dizziness or passing out.
- New or worse behavior and mood changes like change in

thinking, anger, and hallucinations have happened with this drug. Tell the doctor if your child or a family member has any mental or mood problems like depression or bipolar illness, or if a family member has committed suicide. Call the doctor right away if your child has hallucinations; change in the way your child acts; or signs of mood changes like depression, thoughts of suicide, nervousness, emotional ups and downs, thinking that is not normal, anxiety, or lack of interest in life.

- A severe and sometimes deadly problem called serotonin syndrome may happen if your child takes this drug with certain other drugs. Call your child's doctor right away if your child has agitation; change in balance; confusion; hallucinations; fever; fast or abnormal heartbeat; flushing; muscle twitching or stiffness; seizures; shivering or shaking; sweating a lot; severe diarrhea, upset stomach, or throwing up; or severe headache.

If your child is or may be sexually active:

- Not able to get or keep an erection.
- Change in sex interest.

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:

- Dizziness.
- Dry mouth.
- Not hungry.
- Trouble sleeping.
- Diarrhea or constipation.
- Headache.
- Weight loss.
- Upset stomach.
- Bad taste in your child's mouth.
- Feeling nervous and excitable.
- Hair loss.

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 early in the day to help prevent sleep problems.

- Give this drug with or without food.
- Avoid giving this drug with fruit juice.
- Give this drug at the same time of day.

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.

Capsules:

- Have your child swallow whole. Do not let your child chew, break, or crush.

What do I do if my child misses a dose?

- Give a missed dose as soon as you think about it.
- If it is close to the time for your child's next 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.

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

- Store at room temperature protected 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

2019-08-02

Copyright

© 2020 UpToDate, Inc. and its affiliates and/or licensors. All rights reserved.

If you have any questions, contact a member of your healthcare team directly. If you're a patient at MSK and you need to reach a provider after 5:00 PM, during the weekend, or on a holiday, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit www.mskcc.org/pe to search our virtual library.

Dextroamphetamine - Last updated on October 25, 2020

©2020 Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center