



## PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

# Digoxin

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**

Digitek; Digox; Lanoxin; Lanoxin Pediatric

### **Brand Names: Canada**

Digoxin Injection CSD; Lanoxin; Pediatric Digoxin CSD; Toloxin

### **What is this drug used for?**

- It is used to treat heart failure (weak heart).
- It is used to treat a certain type of abnormal heartbeat (atrial fibrillation).
- 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 has an allergy to this drug or any part of this drug.

- If your child is allergic to any drugs like this one or any other drugs, foods, or other substances. Tell the doctor about the allergy and what signs your child had, like rash; hives; itching; shortness of breath; wheezing; cough; swelling of face, lips, tongue, or throat; or any other signs.
- If your child has other heart problems.
- If your child has had a recent heart attack.

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 for your child to take this drug with all of his/her 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?**

#### **All products:**

- 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's blood pressure and heart rate checked often. Talk with your child's doctor.
- Have blood work checked as you have been told by the

doctor. Talk with the doctor.

- Have your child's blood work (digoxin levels) checked. Have blood drawn before the daily dose (give digoxin after blood drawn). Talk with your child's doctor.
- 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.
- If your child will be having certain procedures to help the heart beat normally (defibrillation cardioversion), talk with your child's doctor. Be sure the doctor knows your child takes this drug.
- Many other drugs interact with this drug. These drugs can raise the chance of this drug's side effects. Talk with your child's doctor and pharmacist to make sure that it is safe for your child to use this drug with other drugs.
- Keep away from children. Accidental exposure may cause death. If a child takes this drug by accident, get medical help right away.
- 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.

**All oral products:**

- Tell the doctor if your child eats high bran or fiber meals.

## **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 dizziness or passing out.
- Upset stomach or throwing up.
- Change in eyesight.
- Seeing halos or bright colors around lights.
- Feeling tired or weak.
- Severe diarrhea.
- Weight loss.
- Not hungry.
- Fast or slow heartbeat.
- An abnormal heartbeat that is new or worse.
- Hallucinations (seeing or hearing things that are not there).

- Change in how your child acts.
- Mood changes.
- Feeling confused.
- Very bad belly pain.
- Black, tarry, or bloody stools.
- Throwing up blood or throw up that looks like coffee grounds.
- Enlarged breasts.

### **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:

### **All products:**

- Dizziness.
- Headache.
- Belly pain.

### **Injection (if given in the muscle):**

- Pain where the shot was given.

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 oral products:**

- To gain the most benefit, do not miss giving your child doses.
- Give this drug at the same time of day.
- Keep giving this drug to your child as you have been told by your child's doctor or other health care provider, even if your child feels well.

#### **Liquid (solution):**

- Measure liquid doses carefully. Use the measuring device that comes with this drug.

#### **Injection:**

- It is given as a shot into a muscle or vein.

### **What do I do if my child misses a dose?**

#### **All oral products:**

- 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.

## **Injection:**

- Call your child's doctor to find out what to do.

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

### **All oral products:**

- Store at room temperature.
- Protect from light.
- Store in a dry place. Do not store in a bathroom.

## **Injection:**

- If you need to store this drug at home, talk with your child's doctor, nurse, or pharmacist about how to store it.

### **All products:**

- Keep all drugs in a safe place. Keep all drugs out of the reach of children and 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.
- Keep a list of all your child's drugs (prescription, natural products, vitamins, OTC) with you. Give this list to your child's doctor.
- Talk with your child's doctor before giving your child any new drug, including prescription or OTC, natural products, or vitamins.
- 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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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](http://www.mskcc.org/pe) to search our virtual library.

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