

Dihydroergotamine

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

D.H.E. 45; Migranal

Brand Names: Canada

DHE; Migranal

Warning

- Poor blood flow to the hands, feet, or brain has happened when this drug was taken with certain other drugs like clarithromycin, erythromycin, indinavir, itraconazole, ketoconazole, nelfinavir, ritonavir, and troleandomycin. This may be very bad or even deadly. Do not give this drug to your child if your child is taking any of these other drugs. There are many drugs that can do this. Check to make sure that it is safe for you to give this drug to your child with all of your child's drugs.

What is this drug used for?

- It is used to treat migraine headaches.
- This drug is not approved for use in children. However, the doctor may decide the benefits of taking this drug outweigh the risks. If your child has been given this drug, ask the doctor for information about the benefits and risks. Talk with the doctor if you have questions about giving this drug to your child.

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: High blood pressure or some types of migraine headaches like hemiplegic or basilar migraine.
- If your child has any of these health problems: Blood vessel problems, chest pain or pressure, heart disease, kidney disease, liver disease, poor blood flow, very bad infection, or recent blood vessel surgery.
- If your child has ever had a heart attack.
- If your child has taken almotriptan, eletriptan, frovatriptan, naratriptan, rizatriptan, sumatriptan, or zolmitriptan in the last 24 hours.
- If your child has taken ergotamine, methysergide, or any drug like them in the last 24 hours.

If your child is pregnant:

- Do not give this drug to your child if she is pregnant.

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.
- If your child drinks grapefruit juice or eats grapefruit often, talk with your child's doctor.
- This drug is not meant for regular, daily use. Talk with the doctor.
- This drug is not meant to prevent or lower the number of migraine headaches your child gets. Talk with the doctor.
- Do not give more than the doctor told you to give. Do not give more often or for longer than you were told. Doing any of these things may raise the chance of very bad side effects.
- Use care if your child has risks for heart disease (high blood pressure, high cholesterol, overweight, high blood sugar or diabetes, cigarette smoking, other family members with early heart disease). Talk with the doctor.
- Very bad and sometimes deadly side effects like a heartbeat that does not feel normal, heart attack, stroke, and very bad high blood pressure have happened with this drug. Talk with the doctor.

If your child is pregnant:

- This drug may cause harm to the unborn baby if your child takes it during pregnancy. If your child is pregnant or gets pregnant while taking this drug, call the doctor right away.

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:

All products:

- 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.
- Weakness on 1 side of the body, trouble speaking or thinking, change in balance, drooping on one side of the face, or blurred eyesight.
- Chest pain or pressure.
- Slow heartbeat.
- Dizziness or passing out.
- 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.
- Muscle pain or weakness.
- Muscle cramps.
- Swelling.
- Rarely, heart valve problems have happened with this drug. Call your child's doctor right away if your child has a fast or abnormal heartbeat, shortness of breath, swelling in the arms or legs, or a big weight gain.

Injection:

- Very bad belly pain.

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:

- Upset stomach or throwing up.

Nose spray:

- Nose and throat irritation.
- Change in taste.
- Nosebleed.
- Runny or stuffy nose.
- Burning.
- Dry nose.

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.

Injection:

- It is given as a shot into a muscle or into the fatty part of the skin.
- If you will be giving your child the shot, your child's doctor or nurse will teach you how to give the shot.
- Do not use if the solution is cloudy, leaking, or has particles.
- Do not use if solution changes color.
- Wash your hands before and after use.
- Throw away needles in a needle/sharp disposal box. Do not reuse needles or other items. When the box is full, follow all local rules for getting rid of it. Talk with a doctor or pharmacist if you have any questions.

Nose spray:

- For breathing in through the nose. Prime pump by squeezing it 4 times. Have your child breathe in 1 spray in each nostril.
- Do not let your child tilt his/her head back or sniff through the nose while spraying this drug or right after use.

What do I do if my child misses a dose?

- This drug is given on an as needed basis. Do not give to your child more often than told by the doctor.

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

Nose spray:

- Store at room temperature. Do not refrigerate or freeze.
- Protect from heat and light.
- Once the nose spray is ready, throw away any part of the opened ampul not used after 8 hours.

Injection:

- Most of the time, this drug will be given in a hospital or doctor's office. If stored at home, follow how to store as you were told by the doctor.

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.
- Some drugs may have another patient information leaflet. If you have any questions about this drug, please talk with your 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

2019-10-23

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.

Dihydroergotamine - Last updated on January 12, 2021

All rights owned and reserved by Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center