Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center

PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Ergotamine and Caffeine

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

Cafergot [DSC]; Migergot

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 take this drug if you are taking any of these drugs. There are many drugs that can do this. Check to make sure that it is safe for you to take this drug with all of your drugs.

What is this drug used for?

- It is used to treat migraine headaches.
- Do not take this drug for other types of headaches. It will not work for other headaches.

What do I need to tell my doctor BEFORE I take this drug?

- If you are allergic to this drug; any part of this drug; or any other drugs, foods, or substances. Tell your doctor about the allergy and what signs you had.
- If you have any of these health problems: Blood vessel disease, heart disease, high blood pressure, kidney disease, liver disease, or a very bad infection.
- If you have taken almotriptan, eletriptan, frovatriptan, naratriptan, rizatriptan, sumatriptan, or zolmitriptan in the last 24 hours.
- If you are pregnant or may be pregnant. Do not take this drug if you are pregnant.
- If you are breast-feeding or plan to breast-feed.

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

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

What are some things I need to know or do while I take this drug?

For all patients taking this drug:

- Tell all of your health care providers that you take this drug. This includes your doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and dentists.
- If you drink grapefruit juice or eat grapefruit often, talk with your doctor.
- This drug is not meant for regular, daily use. Talk with the doctor.
- Do not use more than what your doctor told you to use. Do not use more often or longer than what you were told. Doing any of these things may

raise the chance of very bad side effects.

- Use care if you have risks for heart disease (high blood pressure, high cholesterol, overweight, high blood sugar or diabetes, cigarette smoking, male older than 40 years of age, other family members with early heart disease, female after menopause). Talk with your doctor.
- Limit your use of caffeine (for example, tea, coffee, cola) and chocolate. Use with this drug may cause nervousness, shakiness, and a fast heartbeat.
- If you are allergic to tartrazine (FD&C Yellow No. 5), talk with your doctor. Some products have tartrazine.
- This drug may cause harm to the unborn baby if you take it while you are pregnant. If you are pregnant or you get pregnant while taking this drug, call your doctor right away.

Children:

- 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 are some side effects that I need to call my 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 doctor or get medical help right away if you have 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.
- Chest pain or pressure.
- Slow heartbeat.
- Swelling.
- Dizziness or passing out.
- Muscle pain or weakness.
- Change in color of hands, feet, or other areas. Skin may turn pale, blue, gray, purple, or red.
- Numbness, pain, tingling, or cold feeling of the hands or feet.
- Any sores or wounds on the fingers or toes.
- Pain in the calf, thigh, or buttock that gets worse during activity and gets better at rest.
- Rarely, heart valve problems have happened with this drug. Call your doctor right away if you have a fast or abnormal heartbeat, shortness of breath, swelling in the arms or legs, or a big weight gain.

Suppository:

- Rectal sores or 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 doctor or get medical help if any of these side effects or any other side effects bother you or do not go away:

- Upset stomach or throwing up.

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

You may report side effects to your national health agency.

You may report side effects to the FDA at 1-800-332-1088. You may also report side effects at https://www.fda.gov/medwatch.

How is this drug best taken?

Use this drug as ordered by your doctor. Read all information given to you. Follow all instructions closely.

All products:

- Take at the first sign of a migraine headache.

Suppository:

- Use suppository rectally.
- To use suppository, take off foil wrapper.

What do I do if I miss a dose?

- This drug is taken on an as needed basis. Do not take more often than told by the doctor.

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

Tablets:

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

Suppository:

- Store in a refrigerator. Do not freeze.

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 symptoms or health problems do not get better or if they become worse, call your doctor.
- Do not share your drugs with others and do not take anyone else's drugs.
- 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.
- Some drugs may have another patient information leaflet. Check with your pharmacist. 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

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

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

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