



PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Indomethacin

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

Indocin; Tivorbex

Warning

- This drug may raise the chance of heart and blood vessel side effects like heart attack and stroke. If these happen, they can be deadly. The risk of these side effects may be greater if you have heart disease or risks for heart disease. However, the risk may also be raised in people who do not have heart disease or risks for heart disease. The risk of these health problems can happen as soon as the first weeks of using this drug and may be greater with higher doses or with long-term use. Do not use this drug right before or after bypass heart surgery.
- This drug may raise the chance of very bad and sometimes deadly stomach or bowel side effects like ulcers or bleeding. The risk is greater in older people. The risk is also greater in people who have had stomach or bowel ulcers or bleeding

before. These problems may occur without warning signs.
Talk with the doctor.

What is this drug used for?

- It is used to treat arthritis.
- It is used to prevent gouty arthritis.
- It is used to treat ankylosing spondylitis.
- It is used to ease pain.
- It may be given to you for other reasons. Talk with the doctor.

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

All products:

- If you have an allergy to indomethacin or any other part of this drug.
- If you have an allergy to aspirin or NSAIDs.
- If you are allergic to any drugs like this one, any other drugs, foods, or other substances. Tell your doctor about the allergy and what signs you had, like rash; hives; itching; shortness of breath; wheezing; cough; swelling of face, lips, tongue, or throat; or any other signs.
- If you have any of these health problems: Dehydration, GI (gastrointestinal) bleeding, heart failure (weak heart), kidney disease, or liver disease.

- If you have had a recent heart attack.
- If you are having trouble getting pregnant or you are having your fertility checked.
- If you are pregnant or may be pregnant. Do not take this drug if you are in the third trimester of pregnancy. You may also need to avoid this drug at other times during pregnancy. Talk with your doctor to see when you need to avoid taking this drug during pregnancy.
- If you are taking any of these drugs: Triamterene or a salicylate drug like aspirin or diflunisal.
- If you are taking any other NSAID.
- If you are taking pemetrexed.

Suppository:

- If you have had any of these health problems: Swelling of the rectum or anus, or recent rectal bleeding.

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?

- Tell all of your health care providers that you take this drug. This includes your doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and dentists.
- Avoid driving and doing other tasks or actions that call for you to be alert until you see how this drug affects you.
- You may bleed more easily. Be careful and avoid injury. Use a soft toothbrush and an electric razor.
- This drug may affect certain lab tests. Tell all of your health care providers and lab workers that you take this drug.
- Talk with your doctor before you drink alcohol.
- If you smoke, talk with your doctor.
- Have your blood work checked if you are on this drug for a long time. Talk with your doctor.
- High blood pressure has happened with drugs like this one. Have your blood pressure checked as you have been told by your doctor.
- Do not take more than what your doctor told you to take. Taking more than you are told may raise your chance of very bad side effects.
- Do not take this drug for longer than you were told by your doctor.
- If you have asthma, talk with your doctor. You may be more sensitive to this drug.

- The chance of heart failure is raised with the use of drugs like this one. In people who already have heart failure, the chance of heart attack, having to go to the hospital for heart failure, and death is raised. Talk with the doctor.
- The chance of heart attack and heart-related death is raised in people taking drugs like this one after a recent heart attack. People taking drugs like this one after a first heart attack were also more likely to die in the year after the heart attack compared with people not taking drugs like this one. Talk with the doctor.
- If you are taking aspirin to help prevent a heart attack, talk with your doctor.
- Liver problems have happened with drugs like this one. Sometimes, this has been deadly. Call your doctor right away if you have signs of liver problems like dark urine, feeling tired, not hungry, upset stomach or stomach pain, light-colored stools, throwing up, or yellow skin or eyes.
- If you are 65 or older, use this drug with care. You could have more side effects.
- NSAIDs like this drug may affect egg release (ovulation) in women. This may cause you to not be able to get pregnant. This goes back to normal when this drug is stopped. Talk with your doctor.
- 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.

- Tell your doctor if you are breast-feeding. You will need to talk about any risks to your baby.

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 bleeding like throwing up blood or throw up that looks like coffee grounds; coughing up blood; blood in the urine; black, red, or tarry stools; bleeding from the gums; vaginal bleeding that is not normal; bruises without a reason or that get bigger; or any bleeding that is very bad or that you cannot stop.
- Signs of kidney problems like unable to pass urine, change in how much urine is passed, blood in the urine, or a big weight gain.
- Signs of high potassium levels like a heartbeat that does not

feel normal; feeling confused; feeling weak, lightheaded, or dizzy; feeling like passing out; numbness or tingling; or shortness of breath.

- Signs of high blood pressure like very bad headache or dizziness, passing out, or change in eyesight.
- Shortness of breath, a big weight gain, or swelling in the arms or legs.
- Chest pain or pressure.
- Weakness on 1 side of the body, trouble speaking or thinking, change in balance, drooping on one side of the face, or blurred eyesight.
- Feeling very tired or weak.
- Change in eyesight.
- Ringing in ears.
- Low mood (depression).
- Flu-like signs.
- A very bad skin reaction (Stevens-Johnson syndrome/toxic epidermal necrolysis) may happen. It can cause very bad health problems that may not go away, and sometimes death. Get medical help right away if you have signs like red, swollen, blistered, or peeling skin (with or without fever); red or irritated eyes; or sores in your mouth, throat, nose, or eyes.

Suppository:

- Bleeding from rectum or rectal 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:

All products:

- Headache.
- Belly pain or heartburn.
- Upset stomach or throwing up.
- Diarrhea.
- Constipation.
- Gas.
- Dizziness.
- Feeling sleepy.
- Feeling tired or weak.

Suppository:

- Rectal irritation.

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.

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 oral products:

- Take with food to prevent an upset stomach.
- Take with a full glass of water.

Liquid (suspension):

- Shake well before use.
- 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.

Extended-release capsules:

- Swallow whole. Do not chew, break, or crush.

Suppository:

- Use suppository rectally.
- Wash your hands before and after use.
- If suppository is soft, chill in a refrigerator or run cold water over it.
- Take foil off the rectal suppository and put in, pointed end first. Do not handle too much.

What do I do if I miss a dose?

- Take a missed dose as soon as you think about it.
- If it is close to the time for your next dose, skip the missed dose and go back to your normal time.
- Do not take 2 doses at the same time or extra doses.

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

All oral products:

- Store at room temperature. Do not refrigerate or freeze.
- Protect from light.
- Store 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.
- Keep a list of all your drugs (prescription, natural products, vitamins, OTC) with you. Give this list to your doctor.
- Talk with the doctor before starting 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 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.

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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 to search our virtual library.

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