PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Ketotifen (Systemic)

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: Canada**

APO-Ketotifen [DSC]; NOVO-Ketotifen [DSC]; Zaditen

**What is this drug used for?**

- It is used to treat or prevent asthma.
- Do not give this drug to treat an asthma attack. Use a rescue inhaler. 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 is breast-feeding a baby:

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

This drug may interact with other drugs or health problems.

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.
- It may take several weeks to see the full effects.
- Call the doctor right away if your child has breathing problems that get worse, if the rescue inhaler does not work as well, or if your child needs to use the rescue inhaler more often.
- 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.

- Alcohol may interact with this drug. Be sure your child does not drink alcohol.

- Talk with the doctor before giving your child other drugs and natural products that may slow your child’s actions.

- Have blood work checked as you have been told by the doctor. Talk with the doctor.

- Do not stop giving this drug without calling the doctor who ordered it for your child.

- Seizures have rarely happened with this drug. If your child has had seizures, talk with your child’s 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.

Liquid (syrup):

- If your child has high blood sugar (diabetes), talk with the doctor. Some of these products have sugar.

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.
- Seizures.

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:

- Feeling sleepy.
- Weight gain.
- Feeling irritable.
- Dry mouth.
- Dizziness.
- Feeling nervous and excitable.
- Not able to sleep.
- Upset stomach.
- Headache.

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:**

- To gain the most benefit, do not miss giving your child doses.
- 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 (syrup):**

- 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.

**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.
• Store in a dry place. Do not store in a bathroom.
• 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.

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

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