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PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

# Loperamide

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

Anti-Diarrheal [OTC]; Diamode [OTC]; Imodium A-D [OTC]; Loperamide A-D [OTC] [DSC]

## Warning

- Do not give your child more than the package label says or your child's doctor told you to give. Giving more than you were told can cause very bad heart problems, including an abnormal heartbeat. Sometimes, these heart problems can lead to death. Giving this drug with certain other drugs may also raise the chance of these heart problems. Talk with Your child's doctor.
- Do not give to a child younger than 2 years of age.

## What is this drug used for?

- It is used to treat diarrhea.
- It is used to lower ostomy output.

## What do I need to tell the doctor BEFORE my child takes this drug?

### All products:

- 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: Belly pain without diarrhea,

dysentery (may include blood in stools and fever), constipation, or a certain bowel problem called colitis.

- If your child has ever had a long QT on ECG or other heartbeat that is not normal.
- If your child has heart problems.
- If your child has any of these health problems: Low potassium or magnesium levels.
- If your child is taking any drugs that can cause a certain type of heartbeat that is not normal (prolonged QT interval). There are many drugs that can do this. Ask the doctor or pharmacist if you are not sure.

### **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 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?**

- 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.
- 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 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.

- Dehydration and electrolyte problems can happen in people who have diarrhea. Talk with the doctor about what to do to prevent dehydration and electrolyte problems.
- Use with care in children. Talk with the 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.

### **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.
- Chest pain or pressure or a fast heartbeat.
- A heartbeat that does not feel normal.
- Very upset stomach or throwing up.
- Belly pain.
- Constipation.
- Swelling of belly.
- Bloating.
- Fever.
- Black, tarry, or bloody stools.
- Not able to pass urine or change in how much urine is passed.

## 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:

- Dizziness.
- Feeling sleepy.
- Feeling tired or weak.

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:

- Follow how to give this drug as you have been told by your child's doctor. Do not give more than you were told to give.
- Give this drug with or without food.
- Have your child drink lots of noncaffeine liquids every day unless told to drink less liquid by your child's doctor.
- Do not give this drug to your child for longer than you were told by the doctor.

### All liquid products:

- 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.

### Suspension:

- Shake well before use.

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

- Many times 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?**

- Store at room temperature.
- Protect from light.
- 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.
- 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

2016-11-08

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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.

Loperamide - Last updated on January 20, 2020

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