Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center

PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Guaifenesin and Dextromethorphan

This information from UpToDate® Lexidrug™ 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

Altarussin DM [OTC]; Chest Congestion Relief DM [OTC]; Contac Cough & Congestion [OTC]; Coricidin HBP Congestion/Cough [OTC]; Cough & Chest Congestion DM [OTC]; CuraNEX DM [OTC]; Delsym Cgh/Chest Cong DM Child [OTC]; Delsym Cough/Chest Congest DM [OTC]; Fenesin DM IR [OTC]; FT Chest Congestion Relief DM [OTC]; FT Mucus Relief DM [OTC]; FT Tussin DM Adult [OTC]; FT Tussin DM Max Adult [OTC]; FT Tussin DM [OTC]; Geri-Tussin DM [OTC]; GoodSense Mucus DM [OTC] [DSC]; GoodSense Mucus Relief DM [OTC]; Guaiasorb DM [OTC]; Guaicon DMS [OTC] [DSC]; Guaifed-DM [OTC]; Max Tussin DM Cough&Chest Cong [OTC]; Maxi-Tuss G [OTC]; Maxi-Tuss GMX [OTC]; Mucinex Childrens Freefrom [OTC] [DSC]; Mucinex Childrens [OTC]; Mucinex Cough & Chest Congest [OTC]; Mucinex Cough Childrens [OTC]; Mucinex Cough For Kids [OTC] [DSC]; Mucinex DM Maximum Strength [OTC]; Mucinex DM [OTC]; Mucinex Fast-Max DM Max [OTC]; Mucinex Fast-Max Severe Con/Cg [OTC]; Mucolyte-DM [OTC]; Mucus Relief Cough Childrens [OTC] [DSC]; Mucus Relief DM ER Max Str [OTC]; Mucus Relief DM Max [OTC]; Mucus Relief DM [OTC]; NeoTuss [OTC]; Pharbinex-DM [OTC]; Refenesen DM [OTC]; Robafen DM Cough [OTC]; Robafen DM [OTC]; Robitussin Cough & Chest Adult [OTC]; Robitussin Cough & Chest Child [OTC]; Robitussin Cough+Chest Cong DM [OTC]; Robitussin Honey Cgh/Chest DM [OTC]; Siltussin DM DAS [OTC] [DSC]; Siltussin-DM Alcohol Free [OTC] [DSC]; Tussin Cough+Chest Cong DM SF [OTC] [DSC]; Tussin Cough+Chest Congest DM [OTC] [DSC]; Tussin DM Cough

& Chest Conges [OTC]; Tussin DM Max [OTC]; Tussin DM [OTC]; Vanacof XP [OTC]

What is this drug used for?

- It is used to thin mucus so it can be taken from the body by coughing.
- It is used to relieve coughing.

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 a cough with a lot of mucus, a long-term cough caused by smoking or being around smoke, or lung problems like asthma or emphysema.
- If you have taken certain drugs for depression or Parkinson's disease in the last 14 days. This includes isocarboxazid, phenelzine, tranylcypromine, selegiline, or rasagiline. Very high blood pressure may happen.
- If you are taking any of these drugs: Linezolid or methylene blue.

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.
- Do not take more than what your doctor told you to take. Taking more than

you are told may raise your chance of severe side effects.

- Do not take this drug for longer than you were told by your doctor.
- If you are on a low-sodium or sodium-free diet, talk with your doctor. Some of these products have sodium.
- If you have phenylketonuria (PKU), talk with your doctor. Some products have phenylalanine.
- Some forms of this drug may not be for use in all ages of children. If you have questions, talk with the doctor.
- Tell your doctor if you are pregnant, plan on getting pregnant, or are breast-feeding. You will need to talk about the benefits and risks to you and the 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:

- 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.

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 you have any side effects that bother you or do not go away.

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 with or without food. Take with food if it causes an upset stomach.
- Drink lots of noncaffeine liquids unless told to drink less liquid by your doctor.

Tablets and capsules:

- Take with a full glass of water.

Liquid:

- 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 tablets:

- Swallow whole. Do not chew, break, or crush.
- Take with a full glass of water.

Granules:

- Empty the packet onto the tongue and swallow. For best taste, do not chew before swallowing.

What do I do if I miss a dose?

- If you take this drug on a regular basis, 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.
- Many times 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?

- Store at room temperature 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 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

This generalized information is a limited summary of diagnosis, treatment, and/or medication information. It is not meant to be comprehensive and should be used as a tool to help the user understand and/or assess potential diagnostic and treatment options. It does NOT include all information about conditions, treatments, medications, side effects, or risks that may apply to a specific patient. It is not intended to be medical advice or a substitute for the medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment of a health care provider based on the health care provider's examination and assessment of a patient's specific and unique circumstances. Patients must speak with a health care provider for complete information about their health, medical questions, and treatment options, including any risks or benefits regarding use of medications. This information does not endorse any treatments or medications as safe, effective, or approved for treating a specific patient. UpToDate, Inc. and its affiliates disclaim any warranty or liability relating to this information or the use thereof. The use of this information is governed by the Terms of Use, available at https://www.wolterskluwer.com/en/know/clinical-effectiveness-terms.

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If you have questions or concerns, contact your healthcare provider. A member of your care team will answer Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Outside those hours, you can leave a message or talk with another MSK provider. There is always a doctor or nurse on call. If you're not sure how to reach your healthcare provider, call 212-639-2000.

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

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