Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center

PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Methylphenidate

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

Aptensio XR [DSC]; Concerta; Cotempla XR-ODT; Daytrana; Jornay PM; Metadate CD; Methylin; QuilliChew ER; Quillivant XR; Relexxii; Ritalin; Ritalin LA

Brand Names: Canada

AA-Methylphenidate SR; ACT Methylphenidate ER; APO-Methylphenidate; APO-Methylphenidate ER; Biphentin; Concerta; Foquest; Jornay PM; PMS-Methylphenidate; PMS-Methylphenidate CR; Quillivant ER; TARO-Methylphenidate ER

Warning

- This drug has a high risk of misuse. This can lead to alcohol or drug use disorder. Misuse or abuse of this drug can lead to overdose or death. The risk is higher with higher doses or when used in ways that are not approved like snorting or injecting it. Do not give this drug to anyone else.
- This drug may be habit-forming if taken for a long time. Do not take for longer than you have been told by your doctor. Use only as you were told. Tell your doctor if you have ever had alcohol or drug use disorder. You will be watched closely while taking this drug.
- Keep all drugs in a safe place. Keep all drugs out of the reach of children and pets. Throw away unused or expired drugs as you have been told.

What is this drug used for?

- It is used to treat attention deficit problems with hyperactivity.
- It is used to treat narcolepsy.
- 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 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: Glaucoma, agitation, anxiety, or overactive thyroid.
- If you or a family member have any of these health problems: Blood vessel disease, high blood pressure, heart structure problems or other heart problems, or Tourette's syndrome or tics.
- If you have ever had a stroke.
- If you have an adrenal gland tumor called pheochromocytoma.
- 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.

All chewable products:

- If you have trouble swallowing, talk with your doctor.

Long-acting tablets:

- If you cannot swallow this product whole.
- If you have ever had any of these health problems: Cystic fibrosis; narrowing of the GI (gastrointestinal) tract or other GI problems like bowel block, small bowel disease, short gut syndrome, or slow-moving esophagus or bowel tract; peritonitis.

Oral-disintegrating tablet:

- If you are taking any of these drugs: Cimetidine, dexlansoprazole, esomeprazole, famotidine, lansoprazole, nizatidine, omeprazole, pantoprazole, rabeprazole, ranitidine, or sodium bicarbonate.

Long-acting capsules:

- If you have a rare hereditary health problem like glucose-galactose malabsorption, fructose intolerance, or sucrase-isomaltase deficiency. Some of these products have sucrose.

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?

All products:

- Tell all of your health care providers that you take this drug. This includes your doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and dentists.
- If you will be having surgery, talk with your doctor.
- Avoid driving and doing other tasks or actions that call for you to be alert until you see how this drug affects you.
- Have blood work, blood pressure, and heart rate checked as you have been told by the doctor.
- You may need to have some heart tests before starting this drug. If you have questions, talk with your doctor.
- Avoid drinking alcohol while taking this drug.
- 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 taking this drug and have high blood pressure, talk with your doctor before using OTC products that

may raise blood pressure. These include cough or cold drugs, diet pills, stimulants, non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) like ibuprofen or naproxen, and some natural products or aids.

- If you have been taking this drug for a long time or at high doses, it may not work as well and you may need higher doses to get the same effect. This is known as tolerance. Call your doctor if this drug stops working well. Do not take more than ordered.
- This drug may raise the chance of seizures in some people, including people who have had seizures in the past. Talk to your doctor to see if you have a greater chance of seizures while taking this drug.
- If you have phenylketonuria (PKU), talk with your doctor. Some products have phenylalanine.
- If you are allergic to tartrazine (FD&C Yellow No. 5), talk with your doctor. Some products have tartrazine.
- This drug may affect growth in children and teens in some cases. They may need regular growth checks. 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.

Long-acting tablets:

- For some brands, you may see the tablet shell in your stool. For these brands, this is normal and not a cause for concern. If you have questions, talk with your doctor.
- Tell your doctor that you use this drug if you are getting x-rays near the belly.

All long-acting products and skin patch:

- The risk of weight loss and other side effects is higher in children younger than 6 years of age. This drug is not for use in children younger than 6 years of age.

Skin patch:

- Avoid use of heat sources (such as sunlamps, tanning beds, heating pads, electric blankets, heat lamps, saunas, hot tubs, heated waterbeds). Avoid long, hot baths or sunbathing. Your temperature may rise and cause too much drug to pass into your body.
- This drug may lead to loss of skin color at or around where the patch is put on. Sometimes, this has happened at other areas. This may last even after this drug is stopped. The chance may be higher if you or someone in your family has ever had a skin problem called vitiligo. Talk with the doctor.
- This drug may cause harm if chewed or swallowed. This

includes used patches. If this drug has been put in the mouth, call a doctor or poison control center right away.

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 liver problems like dark urine, tiredness, decreased appetite, upset stomach or stomach pain, light-colored stools, throwing up, or yellow skin or eyes.
- Severe headache, dizziness, or passing out.
- Joint pain.
- Purple patches on the skin or mouth.
- Change in eyesight or eye pain, swelling, or redness.
- Seizures.

- Shakiness.
- Trouble controlling body movements.
- Trouble controlling sounds, like humming, throat clearing, yelling, or making loud noises.
- Sweating a lot.
- Restlessness.
- 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.
- Muscle pain or weakness, dark urine, or trouble passing urine.
- Change in sex interest.
- Weakness on 1 side of the body, trouble speaking or thinking, change in balance, drooping on one side of the face, or blurred eyesight.
- Sudden deaths have happened in people with some heart problems or heart defects. Tell your doctor if you have any heart problem or defect. Tell your doctor if a family member has an abnormal heartbeat or died suddenly. Get medical help right away if you have any signs of heart problems like chest pain, abnormal

heartbeat, shortness of breath, or severe dizziness or passing out.

- Call your doctor right away if you have a painful erection (hard penis) or an erection that lasts for longer than 4 hours. This may happen even when you are not having sex. If this is not treated right away, it may lead to lasting sex problems and you may not be able to have sex.
- New or worse behavior and mood changes like change in thinking, anger, and hallucinations have happened with this drug. Tell your doctor if you or a family member have any mental or mood problems like depression or bipolar illness, or if a family member has committed suicide. Call your doctor right away if you have hallucinations; change in the way you act; or signs of mood changes like depression, thoughts of suicide, nervousness, emotional ups and downs, thinking that is not normal, anxiety, or lack of interest in life.
- A severe and sometimes deadly problem called serotonin syndrome may happen if you take this drug with certain other drugs. Call your doctor right away if you have agitation; change in balance; confusion; hallucinations; fever; fast or abnormal heartbeat; flushing; muscle twitching or stiffness; seizures; shivering or shaking; sweating a lot; severe diarrhea, upset stomach, or throwing up; or severe headache.

Skin patch:

- Change in skin color.

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:

- Dizziness or headache.
- Feeling sleepy.
- Dry mouth.
- Stomach pain, upset stomach, throwing up, or decreased appetite.
- Heartburn.
- Weight loss.
- Feeling nervous and excitable.
- Trouble sleeping.
- Nose or throat irritation.

Skin patch:

- Skin 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.

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.

Tablets:

- Take 30 to 45 minutes before meals.
- If taking this drug more than 1 time a day, take the last dose of the day before 6 p.m.

Fast-release chewable tablet:

- Take 30 to 45 minutes before meals.
- Chew well before swallowing.
- Take this drug with a full glass (at least 8 ounces/240 mL) of water. If you do not take with enough water, this drug may swell and block your throat. This could lead to choking. Talk with your doctor.

- If taking this drug more than 1 time a day, take the last dose of the day before 6 p.m.

Extended-release chewable tablet:

- Take in the morning.
- Chew well before swallowing.
- Take with or without food.
- Take with a full glass of water.
- Some products may be broken in half. If you are not sure if you can break this product in half, talk with the doctor.

Oral-disintegrating tablet:

- Take in the morning.
- Take with or without food but take the same way each time. Always take with food or always take on an empty stomach.
- Do not take this drug out of the bottle or blister pack until you are ready to take it. Use dry hands to take it from the bottle or blister. Take this drug right away. Do not store the removed drug for future use.
- Place this drug on your tongue and let it dissolve. Water is not needed. Do not swallow it whole. Do not chew, break, or crush it.

Liquid (solution):

- Take 30 to 45 minutes before meals.
- 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.
- If taking this drug more than 1 time a day, take the last dose of the day before 6 p.m.

Liquid (suspension):

- Take in the morning with or without food. Shake bottle for 10 seconds or more before taking.
- Check to make sure the drug in the bottle is a liquid. If this drug is still a powder, do not use it. Take it back to the pharmacist.
- 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.

Long-acting capsules (Jornay PM):

- Take in the evening.
- Do not take this drug in the morning.
- Take with or without food but take the same way each time. Always take with food or always take on an empty stomach.

- You may sprinkle contents of capsule on applesauce. Do not chew.
- After mixing, take your dose right away. Do not store for future use.

All other long-acting capsules and tablets:

- Take in the morning.
- Some drugs may need to be taken with food or on an empty stomach. For some drugs it does not matter. Check with your pharmacist about how to take this drug.
- Swallow whole. Do not chew, break, or crush.

Long-acting capsules:

- You may sprinkle contents of capsule on applesauce. Do not chew. Swallow right away and follow with water or juice.
- Some products may also be sprinkled on yogurt. Read the package insert or talk with your pharmacist if you are not sure.
- After mixing, take your dose right away. Do not store for future use.

Skin patch:

- Do not cut or divide patches. Do not use patches that are damaged.
- Wash your hands before and after use.
- Put patch on clean, dry, healthy skin on the hip. Do not put the patch on the waistline.
- Do not put on cuts, scrapes, eczema, or damaged skin.
- Put patch on in the morning and take off 9 hours later or as you have been told by the doctor.
- Put the patch in a new area each time you change the patch.
- Water from bathing, swimming, or showering can make the patch not stick well or fall off. If the patch falls off, do not touch the sticky side with your fingers.
- If the patch falls off, put on a new one on some other part of the same hip. Take the new patch off at the normal time.

What do I do if I miss a dose?

Liquid (suspension):

- Call your doctor to find out what to do.

Long-acting capsules (Jornay PM):

- Take a missed dose as soon as you think about it if you remember on the same evening you missed the dose.
- If you do not think about the missed dose until the next morning, skip the missed dose and go back to the normal evening time.
- Do not take 2 doses at the same time or extra doses.

All other long-acting capsules and tablets:

- Skip the missed dose and go back to your normal time.
- Do not take 2 doses at the same time or extra doses.

All other oral products:

- Use a missed dose as soon as you think about it. Do not take this drug after 6 p.m.
- 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.

Skin patch:

- You may apply the patch later in the day. Then take off the patch at your normal time of day.
- Do not put on 2 doses at the same time or extra doses.

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

All products:

- Store at room temperature protected from light. Store in a dry place. Do not store in a bathroom.
- Store this drug in a safe place where children cannot see or reach it, and where other people cannot get to it. A locked box or area may help keep this drug safe. Keep all drugs away from 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.

Oral-disintegrating tablet:

- If this drug comes in blister packs, store the blister packs in the plastic case that comes with this drug.

Liquid (suspension):

- Throw away any part not used after 4 months.
- Store upright with the cap on.

Skin patch:

- Keep patches in the pouch. Use within 2 months of opening tray.

- Do not flush the pouch or the liner down the toilet. Place the pouch and liner in a container, close the container, and put the container in the trash.
- After you take off a skin patch, be sure to fold the sticky sides of the patch to each other. Throw away used patches where children and pets cannot get to them.

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.
- This drug comes with an extra patient fact sheet called a Medication Guide. Read it with care. Read it again each time this drug is refilled. If you have any questions about this drug, please talk with the doctor, 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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