PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Rizatriptan

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

Maxalt; Maxalt-MLT; RizaFilm

Brand Names: Canada

ACCEL-Rizatriptan ODT; ACT Rizatriptan; AG-Rizatriptan ODT; APO-Rizatriptan; CCP-Rizatriptan ODT [DSC]; DOM-Rizatriptan RDT [DSC]; JAMP-Rizatriptan; JAMP-Rizatriptan ODT; M-Rizatriptan; M-Rizatriptan ODT; MAR-Rizatriptan; MAR-Rizatriptan ODT; Maxalt; Maxalt RPD; MYLAN-Rizatriptan ODT; NAT-Rizatriptan ODT; NRA-Rizatriptan ODT; PMS-Rizatriptan RDT; SANDOZ Rizatriptan ODT; TEVA-Rizatriptan ODT

What is this drug used for?

- It is used to treat migraine headaches.

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 high blood pressure.
- If you have ever had any of these health problems: Chest pain or pressure; diseased arteries going to the legs or arms; heart attack; heart disease; poor blood flow in the heart, brain, bowel, or kidney; stroke or transient ischemic

attack (TIA); certain migraines like hemiplegic or basilar migraines; or an abnormal heartbeat like Wolff-Parkinson-White syndrome.

- If you take propranolol.
- If you have taken certain drugs used for depression like isocarboxazid, phenelzine, or tranylcypromine in the last 14 days. Taking this drug within 14 days of those drugs can cause severe high blood pressure.
- If you have taken almotriptan, eletriptan, frovatriptan, naratriptan, sumatriptan, or zolmitriptan in the last 24 hours.
- If you have taken ergotamine, methysergide, dihydroergotamine, or any drug like them in the last 24 hours.

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.
- High blood pressure has happened with this drug. Have your blood pressure checked as you have been told by your doctor.
- You may need a heart function test before starting this drug. If you have questions, talk with the doctor.
- This drug is not meant to prevent or lower the number of migraine headaches you get.
- If you have a headache that is not like your usual migraine headaches, talk

with your doctor before you take this drug.

- Taking more of this drug (a higher dose, more often) than your doctor told you to take may cause your headaches to become worse.
- Use care if you have risks for heart disease (high blood pressure, high cholesterol, overweight, high blood sugar or diabetes, smoking or other nicotine use, male older than 40 years of age, other family members with early heart disease, female after menopause). Talk with your doctor.
- If you have phenylketonuria (PKU), talk with your doctor. Some products have phenylalanine.
- If giving this drug to your child and your child's weight changes, talk with the doctor. The dose of this drug may need to be changed.
- If you are 65 or older, use this drug with care. You could have more side effects.
- 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. Rarely, some allergic reactions have been deadly.
- Signs of high blood pressure like very bad headache or dizziness, passing out, or change in eyesight.
- Change in eyesight.

- Loss of eyesight. This can be long-lasting.
- A burning, numbness, or tingling feeling that is not normal.
- Severe upset stomach or throwing up.
- Severe stomach pain or bloody diarrhea.
- Feeling of heaviness or tightness in the leg muscles.
- Feeling cold.
- A severe and sometimes deadly problem called serotonin syndrome may happen. The risk may be greater if you also take 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 very bad headache.
- Very bad and sometimes deadly heart problems like heart attack and a heartbeat that is not normal have rarely happened within a few hours of taking this drug. Call your doctor right away if you have chest, throat, neck, or jaw tightness, pain, pressure, or heaviness; break out in a cold sweat; shortness of breath; a fast heartbeat; a heartbeat that does not feel normal; or very bad dizziness or passing out.
- Very bad and sometimes deadly brain blood vessel problems like stroke have rarely happened with this drug. Call your doctor right away if you have weakness on 1 side of the body, trouble speaking or thinking, change in balance, drooping on 1 side of the face, or change in eyesight.

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:

- Feeling dizzy, sleepy, tired, or weak.
- Upset stomach.

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 as early as you can after the attack has started.

Adults:

- If your headache does not get any better after the first dose, talk with your doctor. If your headache comes back, you may take 1 more dose if your doctor has told you to do so. If you take a second dose, be sure to wait at least 2 hours after the first dose.

Children:

- If your child takes a dose and your child's headache does not get better, gets better but comes back, or if your child only gets some relief, talk with the doctor before giving another dose.

Oral-disintegrating tablet:

- Be sure your hands are dry before you touch this drug.
- Some brands of this drug come in a blister pack. If this drug comes in a blister pack, take out the tablet right before use. Peel back the foil on the blister. Do not push the tablet through the foil. Doing so may cause the tablet to break.

- Place on your tongue and let it dissolve. Water is not needed. Do not swallow it whole. Do not chew, break, or crush it.

Film:

- Do not remove this drug from the pouch until you are ready to take it.
- Place on your tongue and let it dissolve. This will take about 2 minutes. Water is not needed. This drug can be swallowed with saliva.

What do I do if I miss a dose?

- 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.

Last Reviewed Date

2026-03-27

Copyright

© 2026 UpToDate, Inc. and its affiliates and/or licensors. All rights reserved.

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.

Rizatriptan - Last updated on December 12, 2022

All rights owned and reserved by Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center