PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Allopurinol

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

Aloprim; Zyloprim [DSC]

Brand Names: Canada

AG-Allopurinol [DSC]; APO-Allopurinol; GEN-Allopurinol; JAMP-Allopurinol; Mar-Allopurinol

What is this drug used for?

- It is used to manage certain health problems by lowering uric acid levels in the blood or urine.
- It may be given to your child for other reasons. Talk with the doctor.

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

- 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 been tested and you know that your child has a gene type called HLA-B*5801.
- If your child is taking any of the following: Capecitabine, fluorouracil, or pegloticase.

If your child is breast-feeding a baby:

- Be sure your child does not breast-feed a baby while taking this drug and for 1 week after the last dose.

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 to give this drug with all of your child's other 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.
- 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.
- Have your child's blood work and other lab tests checked as you have been told by the doctor.
- Have your child follow the diet plan your child's doctor told you about.
- Have your child drink lots of noncaffeine liquids every day unless told to drink less liquid by your child's doctor.
- Alcohol may interact with this drug. Be sure your child does not drink alcohol.
- Talk with your child's doctor before your child uses marijuana, other forms of cannabis, or prescription or OTC drugs that may slow your child's actions.
- The chance of severe skin reactions is higher in people who have a certain gene (HLA-B*5801). This gene is

more common in people who are of African, Asian (such as Han Chinese, Korean, Thai), or Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander descent. The doctor may check your child for this gene before your child starts this drug. If you have questions, talk with the doctor.

If your child is pregnant:

- This drug may cause harm to the unborn baby if your child takes it during pregnancy. If you think your child may be pregnant, call the doctor right away.

Tablets:

- It may take several weeks to see the full effects.
- The chance of gout attacks may be higher for a few months after your child starts taking this drug. Do not stop giving this drug to your child without checking with the doctor. Your child may be given other drugs to help from getting gout attacks. Talk with the doctor.

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.
- Signs of kidney problems like unable to pass urine, change in how much urine is passed, blood in the urine, or a big weight gain.
- 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.
- Pain when passing urine.
- Back pain, belly pain, groin pain, or blood in the urine. May be signs of a kidney stone.
- Joint pain that is new or worse.
- Low blood cell counts have happened with this drug. The risk may be raised in people who are also taking other drugs that can cause low blood cell counts. Call your child's doctor right away if your child has any signs of infection like fever, chills, or sore throat; has any unexplained bruising or bleeding; or feels very tired or weak.

- Severe skin reactions may happen with this drug. These include Stevens-Johnson syndrome (SJS), toxic epidermal necrolysis (TEN), and other serious reactions. Sometimes, body organs may also be affected. These reactions can be deadly. Get medical help right away if your child has signs like red, swollen, blistered, or peeling skin; red or irritated eyes; sores in the mouth, throat, nose, eyes, genitals, or any areas of skin; fever; chills; body aches; shortness of breath; or swollen glands.

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:

All products:

- Feeling sleepy.

Tablets:

- Diarrhea.
- Upset stomach.

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.

Tablets:

- Give after meals.
- 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.
- Keep giving this drug even if your child is having a gout attack.

Injection:

- It is given as an infusion into a vein over a period of time.

What do I do if my child misses a dose?

Tablets:

- 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 take 2 doses at the same time or extra doses.

Injection:

- Call your child's doctor to find out what to do.

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

Tablets:

- Store at room temperature protected from light. Store in a dry place. Do not store in a bathroom.

Injection:

- If you need to store this drug at home, talk with your child's doctor, nurse, or pharmacist about how to store it.

All products:

- 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 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

2023-11-09

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.

Allopurinol - Last updated on December 12, 2022

All rights owned and reserved by Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center

Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center