PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Aspirin

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

Ascriptin [OTC]; Aspirin 81 [OTC] [DSC]; Aspirin Adult Low Dose [OTC]; Aspirin Adult Low Strength [OTC]; Aspirin Childrens [OTC]; Aspirin EC Adult Low Dose [OTC]; Aspirin EC Low Strength [OTC]; Aspirin Low Dose [OTC]; Bayer Aspirin EC Low Dose [OTC]; Bayer Aspirin [OTC]; Bayer Low Dose [OTC]; Bufferin Extra Strength [OTC]; Bufferin [OTC]; Durlaza [DSC]; FT Aspirin Adult Low Dose [OTC]; FT Aspirin Low Dose [OTC]; FT Aspirin [OTC]; FT Enteric Coated Aspirin [OTC]; GoodSense Aspirin Low Dose [OTC]; GoodSense Aspirin [OTC]; Medi-First Aspirin [OTC]; Medique Aspirin [OTC]; St Joseph Aspirin [OTC] [DSC]; St Joseph Low Dose [OTC] [DSC]; Tri-Buffered Aspirin [OTC] [DSC]; Vazalore [OTC] [DSC]

What is this drug used for?

- It is used to ease pain and fever.
- It is used to treat some types of arthritis.
- It is used to protect bypass grafts and stents in the heart.
- It is used to lower the chance of heart attack, stroke, and death in some people.
- It may be given to your child for other reasons. Talk with the doctor.

Extended-release capsules:

- This drug is not approved for use in children. However, the doctor may decide the benefits of taking this drug outweigh the risks. If your child has been given this drug, ask the doctor for information about the benefits and risks. Talk with the doctor if you have questions about giving this drug to your child.

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 any of these health problems: Asthma, bleeding problems, nose polyps, or nose irritation.
- If your child has any of these health problems: GI (gastrointestinal) bleeding, kidney disease, or ulcer disease.
- If your child has liver disease.
- If your child or teenager has or is getting better from flu signs, chickenpox, or other viral infections. The risk of a very bad problem called Reye's syndrome may be raised. Do not give this drug to a child or teenager who has or is getting better from a viral infection.
- If your child is taking another drug that has the same drug in it.
- If your child is taking any other NSAID.

If your child is pregnant:

- Talk to the doctor if your child is pregnant, plans to become pregnant, or gets pregnant while taking this drug. This drug may cause harm to an unborn baby if taken at 20 weeks or later in pregnancy. If your child is at 20 weeks or later in pregnancy, only give this drug if the doctor has told you to.

If your child is breast-feeding a baby:

- Talk with the doctor if your child is breast-feeding a baby or plans to breast-feed a baby.

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?

- 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 blood work checked if your child is on this drug for a long time. Talk with your child's doctor.
- Do not give your child more of this drug than what the doctor told you to give. Giving more of this drug than you are told may raise the chance of severe side effects.
- Do not have your child use longer than you have been told by your child's doctor.
- If your child takes this drug on a regular basis, do not stop giving it without calling the doctor who ordered it for your child.
- Your child may bleed more easily. Make sure your child is careful and avoids injury. Be sure your child has a soft toothbrush.
- Alcohol may interact with this drug. Be sure your child does not drink alcohol.
- If your child smokes, talk with the doctor.
- This drug may raise the chance of severe and sometimes deadly stomach or

bowel problems like ulcers or bleeding. The risk is greater in older people, and in people who have had stomach or bowel ulcers or bleeding before. These problems may occur without warning signs.

- This drug may not be for use in children of all ages. Talk with the doctor before giving this drug to a child.

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:

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 bleeding like throwing up or coughing up blood; vomit that looks like coffee grounds; blood in the urine; black, red, or tarry stools; bleeding from the gums; abnormal vaginal bleeding; bruises without a cause or that get bigger; or bleeding you cannot stop.
- 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.
- Signs of high potassium levels like a heartbeat that does not feel normal; feeling confused; feeling weak, lightheaded, or dizzy; feeling like passing out; numbness or tingling; or shortness of breath.
- Signs of too much acid in the blood (acidosis) like confusion; fast breathing; fast heartbeat; a heartbeat that does not feel normal; very bad stomach

pain, upset stomach, or throwing up; feeling very sleepy; shortness of breath; or feeling very tired or weak.

- Weakness on 1 side of the body, trouble speaking or thinking, change in balance, drooping on one side of the face, or blurred eyesight.
- Very bad dizziness or passing out.
- Very bad headache.
- Ringing in the ears, hearing loss, or any other changes in hearing.
- Feeling agitated.
- Seizures.

Suppository:

- Bleeding from rectum or rectal pain.

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 oral products:

- Stomach pain or heartburn.
- Upset stomach or throwing up.

Suppository:

- Rectal irritation.

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 oral products:

- Give this drug with or without food. Give with food if it causes an upset stomach.
- Give this drug with a full glass of water.

Enteric-coated and buffered tablets:

- Have your child swallow whole. Do not let your child chew, break, or crush.

Chewable tablets:

- This drug may be chewed or swallowed whole.

Suppository:

- Suppositories are for rectal use only.
- If suppository is soft, chill in a refrigerator or run cold water over it.
- To use, take off foil wrapper and wet suppository with cold water. Have your child lie down on their side. Use your finger to push the suppository well up into the rectum.

What do I do if my child misses a dose?

- If your child takes this drug on a regular basis, 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 give 2 doses at the same time or extra doses.
- 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?

All oral products:

- Store at room temperature in a dry place. Do not store in a bathroom.
- Protect from heat.

Suppository:

- Store in a refrigerator. Do not freeze.
- Do not use suppositories if they have a vinegar smell.

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.

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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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