PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Cyanocobalamin

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

Dodex [DSC]; Nascobal; Physicians EZ Use B-12; True Vitamin B12 [OTC]; Vitamin Deficiency System-B12

What is this drug used for?

- It is used to help with some kinds of anemia.
- It is used to treat or prevent low vitamin B_{12}.
- 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?

All products:

- 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 an eye problem called Leber's optic atrophy.

Nose spray:

- If your child has any of these health problems: Nasal allergies, stuffy nose, or signs of a common cold.

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's blood work checked often. Talk with your child's doctor.
- Alcohol may interact with this drug. Be sure your child does not drink alcohol.

If your child is pregnant or breast-feeding a baby:

- Talk with the doctor if your child is pregnant, becomes pregnant, or is breast-feeding a baby. You will need to talk about the benefits and risks to your child and the baby.

Injection:

- Very bad and sometimes deadly allergic reactions have rarely happened. Talk with your child's doctor.
- This drug may contain aluminum. There is a chance of aluminum toxicity if your child is on this drug for a long time. The risk is greater if your child has kidney problems. The risk is also higher in premature infants. Talk with the doctor.
- Some products have benzyl alcohol. If possible, avoid products with benzyl alcohol in newborns or infants. Serious side effects can happen in these children with some doses of benzyl alcohol, including if given with other drugs that have benzyl alcohol. Talk with the doctor to see if this product has benzyl alcohol in it.

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 low potassium levels like muscle pain or weakness, muscle cramps, or a heartbeat that does not feel normal.
- Chest pain.
- Feeling cold in the arms or legs.
- Swelling, warmth, numbness, change of color, or pain in a leg or arm.
- Shortness of breath, a big weight gain, or swelling in the arms or legs.
- Change in balance.
- A burning, numbness, or tingling feeling that is not normal.
- 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 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 dizzy, tired, or weak.
- Headache.
- Feeling nervous and excitable.

- Diarrhea, upset stomach, or throwing up.
- Joint pain.
- Signs of a common cold.

Nose spray:

- Nose or throat 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:

- It is best if this drug is taken with a meal.
- 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.

Chewable tablets:

- Have your child chew well before swallowing.

Extended-release tablets:

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

Under the tongue (sublingual) tablet:

- Place under your child's tongue and let dissolve all the way before swallowing. Do not let your child chew, suck, or swallow the tablet.

Under the tongue (sublingual) spray:

- Shake well before use.
- Spray into the mouth under the tongue.

Oral liquid:

- Shake well before use.
- 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.

Lozenge and oral-disintegrating tablet:

- Have your child let dissolve in the mouth. Water is not needed.

Nose spray:

- Do not give this drug by mouth. Use in your child's nose only. Keep out of your child's mouth and eyes (may burn).
- 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.
- Some products need to be primed before first use, or if they are not used for a period of time. Some products do not need to be primed. Check with the doctor or pharmacist to see if your product needs to be primed.
- Have your child blow nose before use.
- Do not let your child use this drug for at least 1 hour before or 1 hour after eating or drinking hot foods or liquids.
- If your child uses other drugs in the nose, talk to the doctor about the best order and when to give your child's drugs.

Injection:

- It is given as a shot into a muscle or into the fatty part of the skin.
- If you will be giving your child the shot, your child's doctor or nurse will teach you how to give the shot.
- 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.
- Wash your hands before and after use.
- Do not use if the solution is cloudy, leaking, or has particles.
- Do not use if solution changes color.
- Throw away needles in a needle/sharp disposal box. Do not reuse needles or other items. When the box is full, follow all local rules for getting rid of it. Talk with a doctor or pharmacist if you have any questions.

What do I do if my child misses a dose?

- 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.

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

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 other products:

- Store at room temperature. Do not freeze.
- Store in a dry place. Do not store in a bathroom.

Nose spray:

- Protect from heat and light.
- Store upright with the cap on.

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

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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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