PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Diazepam

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

Diastat AcuDial [DSC]; Diastat Pediatric [DSC]; diazePAM Intensol; Libervant [DSC]; Valium; Valtoco 10 MG Dose; Valtoco 15 MG Dose; Valtoco 20 MG Dose; Valtoco 5 MG Dose

Brand Names: Canada

Diastat; Valium

Warning

All products:

- This drug is a benzodiazepine. The use of a benzodiazepine drug along with opioid drugs has led to very bad side effects. Side effects that have happened include slowed or trouble breathing and death. Opioid drugs include drugs like codeine, oxycodone, and morphine. Opioid drugs are used to treat pain and some are used to treat cough. Talk with the doctor.
- If your child is taking this drug with an opioid drug, get medical help right away if your child feels very sleepy or dizzy; if your child has slow, shallow, or trouble breathing; or if your child passes out. Get medical help right away if your child does not respond, does not answer or react like normal, or will not wake up.
- Benzodiazepines can put your child at risk for drug use disorder. Misuse

or abuse of this drug can lead to overdose or death, especially when used along with certain other drugs, alcohol, or street drugs. Drug use disorder can happen even if your child takes this drug as told by the doctor. Get medical help right away if your child has changes in mood or behavior, suicidal thoughts or actions, seizures, or trouble breathing.

- Your child will be watched closely to make sure your child does not misuse this drug or develop drug use disorder.
- Benzodiazepines may cause dependence. Lowering the dose or stopping this drug all of a sudden may cause withdrawal. This can be life-threatening. The risk of dependence and withdrawal are raised the longer your child takes this drug and the higher the dose. Talk to the doctor before you lower the dose or stop giving this drug. You will need to follow the doctor's instructions. Get medical help right away if your child has trouble controlling body movements, seizures, new or worse behavior or mood changes like depression or thoughts of suicide, thoughts of harming someone, hallucinations (seeing or hearing things that are not there), losing contact with reality, moving around or talking a lot, or any other bad effects.
- Sometimes, withdrawal signs can last for several weeks to more than 12 months. Tell the doctor if your child has anxiety; trouble with memory, learning, or focusing; trouble sleeping; burning, numbness, or tingling; weakness; shaking; muscle twitching; ringing in the ears; or any other bad effects.

Buccal film:

- This drug is approved for use in children 2 to 5 years old. Use of this drug by someone else or by accident may raise the chance of misuse or abuse, which can lead to overdose and death. Talk with the doctor.

What is this drug used for?

- It is used to treat some types of muscle spasms.
- It is used to treat alcohol withdrawal.
- It is used to help control certain kinds of seizures.
- It is used to treat anxiety.
- It is used to calm a child before a procedure.
- 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 any of these health problems: Glaucoma or liver disease.
- If the patient is a child. This drug may not be for use in all ages of children.

If your child is breast-feeding a baby:

- If your child is breast-feeding a baby or plans to breast-feed a baby. Your child may need to avoid breast-feeding.

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 or clear eyesight 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.
- 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.
- Dizziness, sleepiness, and feeling less stable may happen with this drug. These may lead to falling, which can cause broken bones. The risk of falling is higher in people who are weak or frail. If you have questions, talk with the doctor.
- If seizures are different or worse after starting this drug, talk with the doctor.
- If the patient is a child, use this drug with care. The risk of some side effects may be higher in children.

If your child is pregnant:

- This drug may cause harm to the unborn baby if your child takes it during pregnancy. If your child is pregnant or gets pregnant while taking this drug, call the doctor right away.
- Taking this drug late in pregnancy may raise the chance of breathing or feeding problems, low body temperature, or withdrawal symptoms in the newborn. Talk with the doctor.

Nose spray, buccal film, and rectal gel:

- This drug is not meant for regular, daily use. Talk with the doctor.

All other products:

- Do not change your child's dose or stop giving this drug to your child without calling the doctor. This could cause seizures.
- Have blood work checked if your child is on this drug for a long time. Talk with your child's doctor.
- If your child has been taking this drug for a long time or at high doses, it may not work as well and your child may need higher doses to get the same effect. This is known as tolerance. Call the doctor if this drug stops working well. Do not give more than ordered.

All oral products:

- Avoid giving your child grapefruit and grapefruit juice.

Injection, buccal film, and nose spray:

- 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.

Buccal film:

- If your child's weight changes, talk with the doctor. The dose of this drug may need to be changed.

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.
- Shortness of breath.
- Change in balance.
- Feeling confused.
- Hallucinations (seeing or hearing things that are not there).
- Memory problems or loss.
- Severe dizziness or passing out.
- Muscle spasm.
- Twitching.
- Trouble sleeping.
- Change in eyesight.
- Slurred speech.
- Upset stomach, throwing up, or loss of appetite that is severe or does not go away.
- Like other drugs that may be used for seizures, this drug may rarely raise the risk of suicidal thoughts or actions. The risk may be higher in people who have had suicidal thoughts or actions in the past. Call the doctor right away about any new or worse signs like depression; feeling nervous, restless, or grouchy; panic attacks; or other changes in mood or behavior. Call the

doctor right away if any suicidal thoughts or actions occur.

Injection (I.V.):

- This drug may cause tissue damage if the drug leaks from the vein. Tell your child's nurse if your child has any redness, burning, pain, swelling, blisters, skin sores, or leaking of fluid where the drug is going into your child's body.

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.
- Feeling tired or weak.
- Muscle weakness.

Nose spray, buccal film, and rectal gel:

- Headache.

Nose spray:

- Nose irritation.

Injection:

- Irritation where the shot is given.

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.

Liquid (solution):

- Make sure you have the right liquid; there is more than one strength.
- 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.
- Do not use a household teaspoon or tablespoon to measure this drug. Doing so could lead to the dose being too high.

Liquid (concentrate):

- Make sure you have the right liquid; there is more than one strength.
- Measure liquid doses carefully. Use the measuring device that comes with this drug.
- Mix liquid with water, fruit juice, soda, applesauce, or pudding.
- Give the mixture right away. Do not store for use at a later time.

Buccal film:

- Give this drug with or without food.
- The doctor or nurse will teach you how to give this drug and what kind of seizures to use it for. If you have questions, talk with the doctor or nurse.
- Do not remove this drug from the pouch until your child is ready to take it.
- Be sure your hands are dry before you touch this drug.
- Give the whole film as you have been told. Do not split or tear the film.

- Do not let your child chew or swallow the film.
- Do not give this drug with liquid.
- Place the film inside the mouth on a wet cheek. Hold for 5 seconds so it sticks to the cheek. Let it dissolve.
- If this drug is spit out right away, try to give another dose using a new film. If you cannot give the dose, get medical help right away.
- If this drug is swallowed or chewed by accident, do not give another dose.
- If needed, a second dose may be used at least 4 hours after the first dose if your child's doctor has told you to. Do not use more than 2 doses for 1 episode unless your child's doctor has told you otherwise.
- Do not use to treat more than 5 episodes in a month or more than 1 episode every 5 days.

For rectal use:

- If needed, a second dose may be given 4 to 12 hours after the first dose if the doctor has told you to.
- Do not use to treat more than 5 episodes in a month or more than 1 episode every 5 days.
- Check to make sure the right dose is locked in. You will see a green ready band.
- Call the doctor right away if your child keeps having seizures for 15 minutes after you give this drug, unless the doctor has told you to do something else.

Nose spray:

- If you will be using this drug at home, your doctor or nurse will teach you how to use it.
- 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).
- Be sure you know how to use before an emergency happens. Read the package insert and instructions for use that come with this drug. If you have

any questions about how to use this drug, talk with the doctor or pharmacist.

- Keep this drug with you and your child at all times. Your child may want to keep extra ones at work, school, and home.
- Someone else may have to give this drug. Be sure others know where this drug is stored and how to give it if needed.
- Do **not** test or prime before using.
- If needed, a second dose may be used at least 4 hours after the first dose if your doctor has told you to. Do not use more than 2 doses for the same seizure.
- If the seizure does not stop after using this drug, get medical help right away.
- Do not use to treat more than 5 episodes in a month or more than 1 episode every 5 days.
- Each container is for one use only. Use right after opening. Throw away any part of the opened container after the dose is given.

Injection:

- It is given as an injection into a muscle or vein.

What do I do if my child misses a dose?

All oral products:

- 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 use 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.

Nose spray, buccal film, and rectal gel:

- Get medical help right away.

Injection:

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

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

All oral products:

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

Liquid (concentrate):

- Throw away any part not used after 3 months.

Buccal film:

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

For rectal use:

- Store at room temperature in a dry place. Do not store in a bathroom.
- Store in the case you were given.

Nose spray:

- Store at room temperature in a dry place. Do not store in a bathroom.
- Store in the original container to protect from light.
- Do not freeze.

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:

- 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.

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,

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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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