PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Dihydroergotamine

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

Brekiya; Migranal [DSC]; Trudhesa

Brand Names: Canada

DHE; Migranal

Warning

- Poor blood flow to the hands, feet, or brain has happened when this drug was taken with certain other drugs like clarithromycin, erythromycin, indinavir, itraconazole, ketoconazole, nelfinavir, ritonavir, and troleandomycin. This may be very bad or even deadly. Do not give this drug to your child if your child is taking any of these other drugs. There are many drugs that can do this. Check to make sure that it is safe for you to give this drug to your child with all of your child's drugs.

What is this drug used for?

- It is used to treat migraine headaches.
- 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: High blood pressure or some types of migraine headaches like hemiplegic or basilar migraine.
- If your child has any of these health problems: Blood vessel problems, chest pain or pressure, heart disease, kidney disease, liver disease, poor blood flow, very bad infection, or recent blood vessel surgery.
- If your child has ever had a heart attack.
- If your child has taken almotriptan, eletriptan, frovatriptan, naratriptan, rizatriptan, sumatriptan, or zolmitriptan in the last 24 hours.
- If your child has taken ergotamine, methysergide, or any drug like them in the last 24 hours.

If your child is pregnant:

- Do not give this drug to your child during pregnancy.

If your child is breast-feeding a baby:

- Be sure your child does not breast-feed a baby while taking this drug and for 3 days 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?

- 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.
- High blood pressure has happened with this drug. Have your child's blood pressure checked as you have been told by the doctor.
- Your child may need a heart function test before starting this drug. If you have questions, talk with the doctor.

- Use care if your child has risks for heart disease (high blood pressure, high cholesterol, overweight, high blood sugar or diabetes, smoking or other nicotine use, other family members with early heart disease). Talk with the doctor.
- If your child drinks grapefruit juice or eats grapefruit often, talk with your child's doctor.
- This drug is not meant for regular, daily use. Talk with the doctor.
- This drug is not meant to prevent or lower the number of migraine headaches your child gets. Talk with the doctor.
- Do not give more than the doctor told you to give. Do not give more often or for longer than you were told. Doing any of these things may raise the chance of severe side effects.
- Giving more of this drug (a higher dose, more often) than the doctor told you to give may cause your child's headaches to become worse.

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 high blood pressure like very bad headache or dizziness, passing out, or change in eyesight.
- Change in color of hands, feet, or other areas. Skin may turn pale, blue, gray, purple, or red.
- Numbness, pain, tingling, or cold feeling of the hands or feet.
- Any sores or wounds on the fingers or toes.
- Muscle pain or weakness.
- Cramping or pain in the legs or hips.
- Feeling of heaviness or tightness in the leg muscles.
- Burning or aching pain in the feet or toes.
- Swelling.
- Diarrhea or constipation.

- Severe stomach pain or bloody diarrhea.
- Belly pain after meals.
- Fever.
- Weight loss.
- Severe and sometimes deadly heart problems like heart attack and an abnormal heartbeat have happened with this drug. Call the doctor right away if your child has chest, throat, neck, or jaw tightness, pain, pressure, or heaviness; abnormal arm, back, neck, jaw, or stomach pain; shortness of breath; cold sweats; severe upset stomach or throwing up; or feeling dizzy or passing out.
- Very bad and sometimes deadly brain blood vessel problems like stroke have rarely happened with this drug. Call your child's doctor right away if your child has 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.
- Rarely, heart valve problems have happened with this drug. Call your child's doctor right away if your child has a fast or abnormal heartbeat, shortness of breath, swelling in the arms or legs, or a big weight gain.

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:

Nose spray:

- Upset stomach or throwing up.
- Nose or throat irritation.
- Change in taste.
- Nosebleed.
- Runny or stuffy nose.
- Burning.
- Dry nose.
- Feeling sleepy.

Nose powder:

- Upset stomach or throwing up.
- Nose or throat irritation.
- Change in taste.
- Nosebleed.
- Runny or stuffy nose.

- Cough.
- Sneezing.

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.

Injection:

- It is given as a shot into a vein.

Nose spray:

- For the nose only.
- Give as early as you can after the attack has started.
- This product needs to be put together before using. Once the vial is opened and the nose spray is put together, use within 8 hours. If not used within 8 hours, throw the prepared spray away.
- Before first use, prime pump by spraying it 4 times. After

priming, be sure you know how long the product is good for. Ask the doctor or pharmacist if you are not sure.

- Do not have your child tilt their head back or sniff through the nose while spraying this drug or right after use.

Nose powder:

- For the nose only.
- Be sure you know how to use this drug. Read the instructions that come with this drug. If you have any questions about how to use this drug, talk with the doctor or pharmacist.
- Give as early as you can after the attack has started.
- Do **not** test or prime before using.
- Remove the round blue tab from the blue nozzle. Place the blue nozzle into one nostril. Squeeze the white air pump 3 times. Use fast, complete squeezes. Do not squeeze slowly, partly, or with any hesitation. Let the white air pump go back to its original shape between squeezes.
- Do not give more than 2 doses within 24 hours.

What do I do if my child misses a dose?

- 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?

Nose spray:

- Store at room temperature. Do not refrigerate or freeze.
- Protect from heat and light.

Nose powder:

- Store at room temperature.
- Do not remove this drug from the pouch until your child is ready to take it.

Injection:

- Most of the time, this drug will be given in a hospital or doctor's office. If stored at home, follow how to store as you were told by the doctor.

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 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

2026-09-16

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.

Dihydroergotamine - Last updated on December 12, 2022

All rights owned and reserved by Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center

Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center