PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Liothyronine

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

Cytomel; Liomny; Triostat [DSC]

Brand Names: Canada

AURO-Liothyronine; Cytomel; TEVA-Liothyronine; ZDS-Liothyronine

Warning

- Do not give this drug for weight loss. Severe and sometimes deadly side effects may happen with this drug if it is taken in large doses or with other drugs for weight loss. If you have questions, talk with the doctor.

What is this drug used for?

Tablets:

- It is used to add thyroid hormone to the body.
- It may be given to your child for other reasons. Talk with the doctor.

Injection:

- 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: Overactive thyroid gland or weak adrenal gland.

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.
- Do not run out of this drug.
- It may take several weeks to see the full effects.
- If your child has high blood sugar (diabetes), this drug may sometimes raise blood sugar. Talk with your child's doctor about how to keep your child's blood sugar under control.
- Check your child's blood sugar as you have been told by the doctor.
- Have blood work checked as you have been told by the doctor. Talk with the doctor.
- If your child takes biotin or a product with biotin in it, have your child stop

taking biotin at least 2 days before your child's thyroid level is checked.

- This drug may cause weak bones (osteoporosis) with doses that are too high. Talk with your child's doctor to see if your child has a higher risk of weak bones or if you have any questions.
- This drug may affect growth in children and teens in some cases. They may need regular growth checks. Talk with the doctor.

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.

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.
- Signs of too much thyroid hormone in the body. This includes feeling bothered by heat; shaky; tired or weak; or nervous, excitable, or irritable. This also includes weight loss; appetite changes; fever; sweating a lot; headache; anxiety; emotional ups and downs; trouble sleeping; muscle weakness or cramps; fast or abnormal heartbeat; chest pain or pressure; shortness of breath, a big weight gain, or swelling in the arms or legs; diarrhea; throwing up; stomach cramps; flushing; bone pain; menstrual changes; or fertility problems.

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:

- Hair loss may happen in some people in the first few months of using this drug. This most often goes back to normal.

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.

- Give this drug at the same time of day.
- If your child takes colesevelam, colestipol, cholestyramine, kayexalate, or sevelamer, do not give it within 4 hours before or 4 hours after your child takes this drug.
- 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.

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?

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

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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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