PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Sumatriptan

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

Imitrex; Imitrex STATdose Refill; Imitrex STATdose System; Onzetra Xsail; Tosymra; Zembrace SymTouch

Brand Names: Canada

APO-SUMAtriptan; Imitrex; Imitrex DF; JAMP-Sumatriptan; JAMP-Sumatriptan DF; MYLAN-SUMAtriptan; PMS-SUMAtriptan; PRO-SUMAtriptan Succinate; RATIO-SUMAtriptan; SUMAtriptan DF; TARO-SUMAtriptan; TEVA-SUMAtriptan; TEVA-SUMAtriptan DF

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 liver disease.
- If your child has ever had any of these health problems: Chest pain or pressure; diseased arteries going to the legs or arms; heart attack; heart disease; poor blood flow in the heart, brain, bowel, or kidney; stroke or transient ischemic attack (TIA); migraines like hemiplegic or basilar migraine; or an abnormal heartbeat like Wolff-Parkinson-White syndrome.
- If your child has taken certain drugs for depression like isocarboxazid, phenelzine, or tranylcypromine in the last 14 days. Taking this drug within 14 days of those drugs can cause severe high blood pressure.
- If your child is taking another drug that has the same drug in it.
- If your child has taken almotriptan, eletriptan,

frovatriptan, naratriptan, rizatriptan, or zolmitriptan in the last 24 hours.

- If your child has taken ergotamine, methysergide, dihydroergotamine, or any drug like them in the last 24 hours.

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 your child avoid tasks or actions that call for alertness 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.

- High blood pressure has happened with this drug. Have your child's blood pressure checked as you have been told by the doctor.
- This drug is not meant to prevent or lower the number of migraine headaches your child gets. Talk with the doctor.
- If your child has a headache that is not like the usual migraine headaches, talk with the doctor before you give this drug.
- 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.
- 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 has a latex allergy, talk with the doctor. Some products have latex.

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

- Tell the doctor if your child is pregnant or becomes pregnant. You will need to talk about the benefits and

risks of your child using this drug while pregnant.

- Breast pain has happened with this drug in people who are breast-feeding. Tell the doctor if your child is breast-feeding a baby. You will need to talk about the best way for your child to feed 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. Rarely, some allergic reactions have been deadly.
- Signs of high blood pressure like very bad headache or dizziness, passing out, or change in eyesight.
- Seizures.
- Loss of eyesight. This can be long-lasting.
- A burning, numbness, or tingling feeling that is not

normal.

- Blue or gray color of the skin, lips, nail beds, fingers, or toes.
- Diarrhea or constipation.
- Severe stomach pain or bloody diarrhea.
- Belly pain after meals.
- Fever.
- Weight loss.
- Cramps and pain in legs or hips.
- Feeling of heaviness or tightness in the leg muscles.
- Feeling cold.
- Burning or aching pain in the feet or toes.
- A severe and sometimes deadly problem called serotonin syndrome may happen. The risk may be greater if your child also takes certain other drugs. Call your child's doctor right away if your child has agitation; change in balance; confusion; hallucinations; fever; a fast or abnormal heartbeat; flushing; muscle twitching or stiffness; seizures; shivering or shaking; sweating a lot; severe diarrhea, upset stomach, or throwing up; or very bad headache.
- Very bad and sometimes deadly heart problems like heart attack and a heartbeat that is not normal have

rarely happened within a few hours of taking this drug. Call the doctor right away if your child has chest, throat, neck, or jaw tightness, pain, pressure, or heaviness; breaking out in a cold sweat; shortness of breath; a fast heartbeat; a heartbeat that does not feel normal; or very bad dizziness 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.

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, sleepy, tired, or weak.
- Flushing.
- Feeling of warmth.
- Upset stomach or throwing up.

Nose spray:

- Change in taste.
- Burning.
- Nose or throat irritation.

Nose powder:

- Change in taste.
- Nose or throat irritation.
- Runny or stuffy nose.

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 products:

- If your child takes a dose and your child's headache does not get better, gets better but comes back, or if your child only gets some relief, talk with the doctor before giving another dose.

Tablets:

- Give this drug with or without food.
- Have your child swallow whole. Do not let your child chew, break, or crush.
- Give this drug with liquids as early as you can after the attack has started.

Injection:

- The shot is given under the skin as early as it can be after the attack has started.
- Be sure you know how to use before this drug is needed. Read the package insert and instructions for use that come with this drug. If you have questions about how to use this drug, talk with the doctor or pharmacist.
- Be sure you know where to give the shot. If you are not sure where to give the shot, talk with the doctor.
- Wash 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.

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).
- Give as early as you can after the attack has started.
- Have your child sit down before use.
- Have your child blow nose before use.

Nose powder:

- For the nose only.
- Give as early as you can after the attack has started.
- Use nosepiece right after taking it out of the foil pouch.
- Only use the device that comes with this drug. Do not use any other devices.
- 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.

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?

All products:

- Store at room temperature. Do not refrigerate or freeze.
- Store in a dry place. Do not store in a bathroom.
- Protect from light.
- 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.

Injection:

- If you were given a storage case, store in the case you were given.

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.

Last Reviewed Date

2026-01-21

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.

Sumatriptan - Last updated on December 12, 2022

All rights owned and reserved by Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center

Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center