PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Norfloxacin

This information from Lexicomp® 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: Canada
ALTI-Norfloxacin; APO-Norfloxacin; CO Norfloxacin [DSC]; PMS-Norfloxacin [DSC]; TEVA-Norfloxacin [DSC]

Warning

• This drug may cause severe side effects like irritated or torn tendons; nerve problems in the arms, hands, legs, or feet; and nervous system problems. These can happen alone or at the same time. They can happen within hours to weeks after starting this drug. Some of these effects may not go away, and may lead to disability or death.

• The chance of irritated or torn tendons is greater in people over the age of 60; heart, kidney, or lung transplant patients; or people taking steroid drugs. Tendon problems can happen as long as several months after treatment. Call your doctor right away if you have pain, bruising, or swelling in the back of the ankle, shoulder, hand, or other joints. Call your doctor right away if you are not able to move or bear
weight on a joint or if you hear or feel a snap or pop.

- Call your doctor right away if you have signs of nerve problems. These may include not being able to handle heat or cold; change in sense of touch; or burning, numbness, tingling, pain, or weakness in the arms, hands, legs, or feet.

- Call your doctor right away if you have signs of nervous system problems. These may include anxiety, bad dreams, trouble sleeping, change in eyesight, dizziness, feeling confused, feeling nervous or agitated, feeling restless, hallucinations (seeing or hearing things that are not there), new or worse behavior or mood changes like depression or thoughts of killing yourself, seizures, or very bad headaches.

- Do not take if you have myasthenia gravis. Very bad and sometimes deadly breathing problems have happened with this drug in people who have myasthenia gravis.

- For some health problems, this drug is only for use when other drugs cannot be used or have not worked. Talk with the doctor to be sure that the benefits of this drug are more than the risks.

**What is this drug used for?**

- It is used to treat bacterial infections.

**What do I need to tell my doctor BEFORE I take this drug?**

**For all patients taking this drug:**

- If you have an allergy to norfloxacin or any other part of this
drug.

- If you are allergic to this drug; any part of this drug; or any other drugs, foods, or substances. Tell your doctor about the allergy and what signs you had.

- If you have any of these health problems: Long QT on ECG, low magnesium levels, or low potassium levels.

- If you have ever had any of these health problems: Nerve problems or tendon problems.

- If you have had tendons get irritated or torn when taking this drug or an alike drug in the past.

- If you are not able to pass urine.

- If you are taking probenecid.

- If you have been taking any drugs to treat a heartbeat that is not normal.

- If you are taking any drugs that can cause a certain type of heartbeat that is not normal (prolonged QT interval). There are many drugs that can do this. Ask your doctor or pharmacist if you are not sure.

**Children:**

- If the patient is a child. This drug is not approved for use in children.

This is not a list of all drugs or health problems that interact with this drug.
Tell your doctor and pharmacist about all of your drugs (prescription or OTC, natural products, vitamins) and health problems. You must check to make sure that it is safe for you to take this drug with all of your drugs and health problems. Do not start, stop, or change the dose of any drug without checking with your doctor.

What are some things I need to know or do while I take this drug?

- Tell all of your health care providers that you take this drug. This includes your doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and dentists.

- Avoid driving and doing other tasks or actions that call for you to be alert or have clear eyesight until you see how this drug affects you.

- Have blood work checked as you have been told by the doctor. Talk with the doctor.

- High and low blood sugar has happened with drugs like this one. Most of the time, low blood sugar happened in people with diabetes who were taking drugs that lower blood sugar like insulin. Very low blood sugar has led to coma and sometimes death. Check blood sugar as you have been told by the doctor.

- Tell your doctor if you have signs of high or low blood sugar like breath that smells like fruit, dizziness, fast breathing, fast heartbeat, feeling confused, feeling sleepy, feeling weak, flushing, headache, more thirsty or hungry, passing urine
more often, shaking, or sweating.

- Do not use longer than you have been told. A second infection may happen.

- Tell your doctor if you take a drug that has caffeine, or you eat or drink products that have caffeine, like tea, coffee, cola, or chocolate.

- You may get sunburned more easily. Avoid sun, sunlamps, and tanning beds. Use sunscreen and wear clothing and eyewear that protects you from the sun.

- Drink lots of noncaffeine liquids every day unless told to drink less liquid by your doctor.

- Be careful if you have G6PD deficiency. Anemia may happen.

- A very bad skin reaction (Stevens-Johnson syndrome/toxic epidermal necrolysis) may happen. It can cause very bad health problems that may not go away, and sometimes death. Get medical help right away if you have signs like red, swollen, blistered, or peeling skin (with or without fever); red or irritated eyes; or sores in your mouth, throat, nose, or eyes.

- If you are over the age of 60, use this drug with care. You could have more side effects.

- Tell your doctor if you are pregnant or plan on getting pregnant. You will need to talk about the benefits and risks of using this drug while you are pregnant.

- Tell your doctor if you are breast-feeding. You will need to
talk about any risks to your baby.

**What are some side effects that I need to call my 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 doctor or get medical help right away if you have 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 a pancreas problem (pancreatitis) like very bad stomach pain, very bad back pain, or very bad upset stomach or throwing up.
- Signs of kidney problems like unable to pass urine, change in how much urine is passed, blood in the urine, or a big weight gain.
- Dizziness or passing out.
- Chest pain or pressure, a fast heartbeat, or passing out.
- A heartbeat that does not feel normal.
- Feeling very tired or weak.
- Shortness of breath.
- Any unexplained bruising or bleeding.
- Purple spots or redness of the skin.
- Fever or chills.
- Ringing in ears.
- Shakiness.
- Trouble walking.
- Muscle pain or weakness.
- Vaginal itching or discharge.
- White patches in mouth.

- Very bad and sometimes deadly liver problems have happened with this drug. Call your doctor right away if you have signs of liver problems like dark urine, feeling tired, not hungry, upset stomach or stomach pain, light-colored stools, throwing up, or yellow skin or eyes.

- Diarrhea is common with antibiotics. Rarely, a severe form called C diff–associated diarrhea (CDAD) may happen. Sometimes, this has led to a deadly bowel problem (colitis). CDAD may happen during or a few months after taking antibiotics. Call your doctor right away if you have stomach pain, cramps, or very loose, watery, or bloody stools. Check with your doctor before treating diarrhea.

**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 doctor or get medical help if any of these side effects or any other side
effects bother you or do not go away:

- Headache.
- Dizziness.
- Upset stomach or throwing up.
- Diarrhea.
- Constipation.
- Not hungry.
- Feeling sleepy.

These are not all of the side effects that may occur. If you have questions about side effects, call your doctor. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects.

You may report side effects to your national health agency.

**How is this drug best taken?**

Use this drug as ordered by your doctor. Read all information given to you. Follow all instructions closely.

- Take this drug at the same time of day.
- Take on an empty stomach. Take 1 hour before or 2 hours after meals or having milk or other dairy products.
- Take with a full glass of water.
- Do not take dairy products, antacids, didanosine, multivitamins, minerals (calcium, iron, zinc, magnesium), or sucralfate within 2 hours of this drug.
• Keep using this drug as you have been told by your doctor or other health care provider, even if you feel well.

What do I do if I miss a dose?

• Skip the missed dose and go back to your normal time.
• Do not take 2 doses at the same time or extra doses.

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

• Store at room temperature.
• Keep lid tightly closed.
• Protect from light.
• Store 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 symptoms or health problems do not get better or if they become worse, call your doctor.
• Do not share your drugs with others and do not take anyone else’s drugs.
• 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.

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**Last Reviewed Date**
2019-01-18

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