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PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

# Ofloxacin (Systemic)

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.

## 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 heart, kidney, or lung transplant patients and in people taking steroid drugs. Tendon problems can happen as long as several months after treatment. Call your child's doctor right away if your child has pain, bruising, or swelling in the back of the ankle, shoulder, hand, or other joints. Call your child's doctor right away if your child is not able to move or bear weight on a joint or if your child hears or feels a snap or pop.
- Call your child's doctor right away if your child has signs of

nerve problems. These may include not 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 child's doctor right away if your child has 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 suicide, seizures, or very bad headaches.
- Do not give this drug if your child has 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.
- 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: Long QT on ECG, low magnesium levels, or low potassium levels.
- If your child has ever had any of these health problems: Nerve problems or tendon problems.
- If your child has had tendons get irritated or torn when taking this drug or an alike drug in the past.
- If your child has an aortic aneurysm (ballooning or bulging of the aorta, the main blood vessel that comes out of the heart) or is at risk for this health problem. This includes if your child has other blood vessel problems, high blood pressure, or certain health problems like Marfan syndrome or Ehlers-Danlos syndrome.
- If your child is 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 the doctor or pharmacist if you are not sure.

## **If your child is breast-feeding a baby:**

- Talk with the doctor if your child is breast-feeding a baby or plans to breast-feed a baby.

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.
- Do not give to your child longer than you have been told. A second infection may happen.
- 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 child's doctor if your child has 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.
- Have your child's blood work checked if he/she is on this drug for a long time. Talk with your child's doctor.
- This drug may affect certain lab tests. Tell all of your child's health care providers and lab workers that your child takes this drug.
- Your child may get sunburned more easily. Avoid lots of sun, sunlamps, and tanning beds. Use sunscreen and dress your child in clothing and eyewear that protects him/her from the sun.
- Have your child drink lots of noncaffeine liquids every day unless told to drink less liquid by your child's doctor.
- Very bad and sometimes deadly allergic side effects have rarely happened. Talk with your child's doctor.
- Rarely, very bad and sometimes deadly effects have happened

with this drug. These include muscle or joint, kidney, liver, blood, and other problems. Talk with the doctor if you have questions.

### **If your child is pregnant:**

- 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.

### **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 kidney problems like unable to pass urine, change in how much urine is passed, blood in the urine, or a big weight gain.
- 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.

- Chest pain or pressure.
- Fever, chills, or sore throat; any unexplained bruising or bleeding; or feeling very tired or weak.
- Shakiness.
- Trouble walking.
- Shortness of breath.
- Vaginal itching or discharge.
- White patches in mouth.
- Muscle pain or weakness.
- Not able to focus.
- Memory problems or loss.
- A type of abnormal heartbeat (prolonged QT interval) can happen with this drug. Call the doctor right away if your child has a fast heartbeat, a heartbeat that does not feel normal, or if your child passes out.
- 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 your child has signs like red, swollen, blistered, or peeling skin (with or without fever); red or

irritated eyes; or sores in the mouth, throat, nose, 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 child’s doctor right away if your child has stomach pain, cramps, or very loose, watery, or bloody stools. Check with your child’s doctor before treating diarrhea.
- A rare but severe problem with the main blood vessel that comes out of the heart (aorta) has happened within 2 months after taking drugs like this one, especially in elderly patients. This includes tears or bursting of the aorta. This can lead to severe bleeding and even death. The cause for this effect is not known. Call your doctor right away if you have sudden pain in the stomach, chest, or back that is severe and does not go away.

### **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:

- Headache.
- Dizziness.
- Upset stomach or throwing up.



- Diarrhea.
- Change in taste.

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 with or without food.
- Do not give your child dairy products, antacids, didanosine, sucralfate, multivitamins, or other products that contain calcium, magnesium, aluminum, iron, or zinc within 2 hours before or 2 hours after taking 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.
- 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 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 information should not be used to decide whether or not to take this medicine or any other medicine. Only the healthcare provider has the knowledge and training to decide which medicines are right for a specific patient. This information does not endorse any medicine as safe, effective, or approved for treating any patient or health condition. This is only a brief summary of general information about this medicine. It does NOT include all information about the possible uses, directions, warnings, precautions, interactions, adverse effects, or risks that may apply to this medicine. This information is not specific medical advice and does not replace information you receive from the healthcare provider. You must talk with the healthcare provider for complete information about the risks and benefits of using this medicine.

### **Last Reviewed Date**

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If you have any questions, contact a member of your healthcare team directly. If you're a patient at MSK and you need to reach a provider after 5:00 PM, during the weekend, or on a holiday, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit [www.mskcc.org/pe](http://www.mskcc.org/pe) to search our virtual library.

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