Rifampin

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: US**
Rifadin

**Brand Names: Canada**
Rifadin; Rofact

**What is this drug used for?**
- It is used to treat TB (tuberculosis).
- It is used to stop the spread of meningitis in people who carry the bacteria but are not sick with the disease.
- It may be given to you for other reasons. Talk with the doctor.

**What do I need to tell my doctor BEFORE I take 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 take any drugs (prescription or OTC, natural products, vitamins) that must not be taken with this drug, like certain drugs that are used for HIV, infections, or depression. There are many drugs that must not be taken with this drug. Your doctor or pharmacist can tell you if you are taking a drug that must not be taken with this drug.
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.

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

- This drug may affect certain lab tests. Tell all of your health care providers and lab workers that you take this drug.

- Avoid drinking alcohol while taking this drug.

- If you have high blood sugar (diabetes), you will need to watch your blood sugar closely. Tell your doctor if you get signs of high blood sugar like confusion, feeling sleepy, more thirst, more hungry, passing urine more often, flushing, fast breathing, or breath that smells like fruit.

- This drug may stain contact lenses.

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

- A severe and sometimes deadly reaction has happened. Most of the time, this reaction has signs like fever, rash, or swollen glands with problems in body organs like the liver, kidney, blood, heart, muscles and joints, or lungs. If you have questions, talk with the doctor.

- Liver problems have happened with this drug. Sometimes these problems have been deadly in people who had liver disease and in people who took this drug with other drugs that may raise the chance of liver problems. If you have questions, talk with the doctor.
• 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.

• A severe skin reaction (Stevens-Johnson syndrome/toxic epidermal necrolysis) may happen. It can cause severe 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 65 or older, use this drug with care. You could have more side effects.

• Birth control pills and other hormone-based birth control may not work as well to prevent pregnancy. Use some other kind of birth control also like a condom when taking this drug.

• Tell your doctor if you are pregnant, plan on getting pregnant, or are breast-feeding. You will need to talk about the benefits and risks to you and the 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:

All products:

• 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.

• Dizziness or passing out.

• Flu-like signs.
• Fever, chills, or sore throat; any unexplained bruising or bleeding; or feeling very tired or weak.

• Swollen gland.

• Joint pain or swelling.

• Muscle pain or weakness.

• Shortness of breath.

• Chest pain.

• Cough.

• Sweating a lot.

• A heartbeat that does not feel normal.

• Swelling in the arms or legs.

• Purple spots or redness of the skin.

• Change in balance.

• Feeling confused, not able to focus, or change in behavior.

• Period (menstrual) changes.

• Change in eyesight, eye pain, or very bad eye irritation.

• Change in tooth color. These changes may be long-lasting.

• 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. 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.

**Injection:**

• This drug may irritate the vein. If the drug leaks from the vein, it may also cause irritation around that area. Tell your nurse if you have any redness, burning, pain, swelling, or leaking of fluid where the drug is going into your body.
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:

- Feeling sleepy.
- Gas.
- Headache.
- Diarrhea, upset stomach, or throwing up.
- Not hungry.
- Heartburn.
- Stomach cramps.
- Feeling tired or weak.
- Change in color of body fluids to orange or red.

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.

You may report side effects to the FDA at 1-800-332-1088. You may also report side effects at https://www.fda.gov/medwatch.

How is this drug best taken?

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

Capsules:

- Take on an empty stomach. Take 1 hour before or 2 hours after meals.
- Take with a full glass of water.
- Keep taking this drug as you have been told by your doctor or other health care
provider, even if you feel well.

- If you are taking an antacid, take this drug at least 1 hour before taking the antacid.

- A liquid (suspension) can be made if you cannot swallow pills. Talk with your doctor or pharmacist.

- If a liquid (suspension) is made, shake well before use.

- Measure liquid doses carefully. Use the measuring device that comes with this drug. If there is none, ask the pharmacist for a device to measure this drug.

**Injection:**

- It is given as an infusion into a vein over a period of time.

**What do I do if I miss a dose?**

**Capsules:**

- Take a missed dose as soon as you think about it.

- If it is close to the time for your next dose, skip the missed dose and go back to your normal time.

- Do not take 2 doses at the same time or extra doses.

**Injection:**

- Call your doctor to find out what to do.

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

**Capsules:**

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

- Protect from heat and light.

- If a liquid (suspension) is made, store at room temperature or in a refrigerator. Throw away any part not used after 4 weeks.
Injection:

- If you need to store this drug at home, talk with your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist about how to store it.

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 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.
- Some drugs may have another patient information leaflet. Check with your pharmacist. 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

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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 to search our virtual library.

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