Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center

PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Diltiazem

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

Cardizem; Cardizem CD; Cardizem LA; Cartia XT; Dilt-XR; Matzim LA; Taztia XT; Tiadylt ER; Tiazac

Brand Names: Canada

AA-Diltiaz; ACT Diltiazem CD; ACT Diltiazem T; APO-Diltiaz CD; Cardizem CD [DSC]; Diltiazem CD; DilTIAZem T; Diltiazem TZ [DSC]; Diltiazem-CD [DSC]; JAMP Diltiazem T; JAMP-dilTIAZem CD; MAR-Diltiazem CD; MAR-Diltiazem T; Pharma-Diltiaz; PMS-Diltiazem CD [DSC]; PRO-Diltiazem CD; SANDOZ Diltiazem CD [DSC]; SANDOZ Diltiazem T [DSC]; TEVA dilTIAZem XC; TEVA-Diltazem [DSC]; TEVA-Diltiazem CD; TEVA-Diltiazem HCl ER; Tiazac; Tiazac XC

What is this drug used for?

- It is used to treat high blood pressure.
- It is used to treat some types of chest pain (angina).
- It is used to treat certain types of abnormal heartbeats.
- 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 have certain types of abnormal heartbeats. There are many types of abnormal heartbeats with which this drug must not be used. Ask your doctor or pharmacist if you are not sure.
- If you have any of these health problems: Fluid in the lungs, low blood pressure, or recent heart attack.
- If you are taking any of these drugs: Ivabradine or rifampin.

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 until you see how this drug affects you.
- To lower the chance of feeling dizzy or passing out, rise slowly if you have been sitting or lying down. Be careful going up and down stairs.
- Check blood pressure and heart rate as the doctor has told you.
- You may need to have an ECG checked before starting this drug and while taking it. Talk with your doctor.

- If you are taking this drug and have high blood pressure, talk with your doctor before using OTC products that may raise blood pressure. These include cough or cold drugs, diet pills, stimulants, non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) like ibuprofen or naproxen, and some natural products or aids.
- If you drink grapefruit juice or eat grapefruit often, talk with your doctor.
- You may need to avoid drinking alcohol with some products. Talk with your doctor or pharmacist to see if you need to avoid drinking alcohol with this drug.
- If you are 65 or older, use this drug with care. You could have more side effects.
- 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:

- 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 liver problems like dark urine, tiredness, decreased appetite, upset stomach or stomach pain, light-colored stools, throwing up, or yellow skin or eyes.
- Severe dizziness or passing out.
- Slow heartbeat.
- An abnormal heartbeat that is new or worse.

- Heart failure has gotten worse in some people taking this drug. If you have heart failure, talk with your doctor. Call your doctor right away if you have shortness of breath, a big weight gain, or swelling in the arms or legs.
- Severe skin reactions have happened with this drug. These have included Stevens-Johnson syndrome (SJS), toxic epidermal necrolysis (TEN), and other severe skin reactions. Sometimes these have been deadly. Get medical help right away if you have signs like red, swollen, blistered, or peeling skin; other skin irritation (with or without fever); red or irritated eyes; or sores in your mouth, throat, nose, or eyes.

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:

All oral products:

- Headache.
- Feeling dizzy, tired, or weak.

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 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.

All oral products:

- Take this drug at the same time of day.
- Keep taking this drug as you have been told by your doctor or other health care provider, even if you feel well.

Regular-release tablets:

- This drug may be swallowed whole, crushed, or chewed.

30 mg tablets:

- Do not split or break tablet.

Long-acting tablets and 12 hour capsules:

- Swallow whole. Do not chew, break, or crush.

Long-acting capsules (24 hour):

- Some drugs may need to be taken with food or on an empty stomach. For some drugs it does not matter. Check with your pharmacist about how to take this drug.
- Some products may be opened and sprinkled on a spoonful of applesauce. Some products must be swallowed whole. Check with your pharmacist to see if you can open this product.

Injection:

- It is given into a vein for a period of time.

What do I do if I miss a dose?

All oral products:

- 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?

All oral products:

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

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

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.

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If you have any questions, contact a member of your care team directly. If you're a patient at MSK and you need to reach a provider after 5 p.m., 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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