

Patient Education

METHYLPHENIDATE - ORAL

IMPORTANT NOTE: The following information is intended to supplement, not substitute for, the expertise and judgment of your physician, pharmacist or other healthcare professional. It should not be construed to indicate that use of the drug is safe, appropriate, or effective for you. Consult your healthcare professional before using this drug.

METHYLPHENIDATE - ORAL

(meth-ill-FEN-eh-date)

COMMON BRAND NAME(S): Ritalin

WARNING: Methylphenidate should be given cautiously to emotionally unstable patients such as those with a history of alcohol or drug abuse. These patients may be more likely to unnecessarily increase their doses or take this medication too often. Long-term overuse of this medication may lead to reduced drug effect, drug dependence, and abnormal behavior.

Take this medication only by mouth. Serious mental/mood changes (e.g., psychosis) may occur, especially if this drug is abused.

If methylphenidate must be stopped, it should be stopped gradually over time. Follow your doctor's instructions on how to gradually lower the dose. In some patients, long-term monitoring may be required after the medication is stopped.

USES:

Methylphenidate is used to treat attention disorders (attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, or ADHD) as part of a total treatment plan including psychological, educational and social measures. This medication is also used to treat patients with narcolepsy (a disorder of sleep regulation). When used to treat ADHD, patients may find they have increased attention, decreased impulsiveness, and decreased hyperactivity (see also Notes section). This medication is a mild stimulant that works by affecting the levels of chemicals (neurotransmitters) in the nervous system.

This medication should not be used to treat simple fatigue symptoms.

OTHER USES:

This medication may also be used for treating depression in certain cases.

HOW TO USE:

This medication is best taken 30 to 45 minutes before a meal or take as directed by your doctor. If loss of appetite occurs or if you experience stomach upset, it may be taken with or after meals or a snack.

Use this medication regularly in order to get the most benefit from it. To help you remember, use it at the same time(s) each day. It may take up to two weeks to notice an improvement while on this drug.

Use this medication exactly as prescribed. Dosage is based on your medical condition and response to therapy. Your doctor may instruct you to gradually increase or decrease your dose. Do not increase your dose, use it more frequently or use it for a longer period of time than

prescribed because this drug can be habit-forming. Also, if used for a long period of time, do not suddenly stop using this without first consulting your doctor.

This medication may cause dependence, especially if it has been used regularly for an extended period of time, or if it has been used in high doses. In such cases, if you suddenly stop this drug, withdrawal reactions may occur. Such reactions can include severe depression and chronic overactivity. Report to your doctor immediately any such reactions. When stopping extended, regular treatment with this drug, gradually reducing the dosage as directed will help prevent withdrawal reactions. Consult your doctor or pharmacist for more details.

Though it is very unlikely to occur, this medication can also result in abnormal drug-seeking behavior (addiction/habit-forming). Do not increase your dose, take it more frequently or use it for a longer period of time than prescribed. Properly stop the medication when so directed. This will lessen the chances of becoming addicted.

When used for an extended period, this medication may not work as well and may require different dosing. Talk with your doctor if this medication stops working well.

Inform your doctor if your condition persists or worsens.

SIDE EFFECTS:

Headache, stomach pain, loss of appetite, trouble sleeping, dizziness, nausea, vomiting, lightheadedness, irritability, nervousness, blurred vision, dry mouth, constipation or (rarely) drowsiness may occur. If any of these effects persist or worsen, notify your doctor or pharmacist promptly.

Remember that your doctor has prescribed this medication because the benefit to you is greater than the risk of side effects. Many people using this medication do not have serious side effects.

Tell your doctor immediately if any of these unlikely but serious side effects occur: uncontrolled movements (motor tics or tremor), verbal tics (e.g., Tourette's syndrome), weight loss, fast/pounding/irregular heartbeat, chest pain, mental/mood changes, difficulty urinating.

Tell your doctor immediately if any of these rare but very serious side effects occur: signs of infection (e.g., fever, persistent sore throat), easy bruising/bleeding.

A very serious allergic reaction to this drug is unlikely, but seek immediate medical attention if it occurs. Symptoms of a serious allergic reaction may include: rash, itching, swelling, severe dizziness, trouble breathing.

If you notice other effects not listed above, contact your doctor or pharmacist.

PRECAUTIONS:

Before taking methylphenidate, tell your doctor or pharmacist if you are allergic to it; or if you have any other allergies.

This medication should not be used if you have certain medical conditions. Before using this medicine, consult your doctor or pharmacist if you have: severe anxiety/tension/agitation, glaucoma, motor tics.

Before using this medication, tell your doctor or pharmacist your medical history, especially of: high blood pressure (hypertension), heart disease (e.g., heart failure, recent heart attack, abnormal heart rhythm), overactive thyroid (hyperthyroidism), other mental/mood conditions (e.g.,

psychosis, severe depression), seizures, verbal tics (diagnosis or family history of Tourette's syndrome).

This drug may make you dizzy, lightheaded, (rarely) drowsy or cause blurred vision; use caution engaging in activities requiring alertness or clear vision such as driving or using machinery. Limit alcoholic beverages.

Though uncommon, depression itself can lead to thoughts or attempts of suicide. If you are being treated for depression, tell your doctor immediately if you have any suicidal thoughts, or other mental/mood changes. Keep all medical appointments so your doctor can monitor your progress closely.

Prolonged use of stimulants like methylphenidate could possibly hinder growth (weight gain and height) in children. Monitor your child's height and growth rate regularly. Consult your doctor or pharmacist for more details.

Methylphenidate should be used during pregnancy only when clearly needed. Discuss the risks and benefits with your doctor.

It is not known if methylphenidate passes into breast milk. Consult your doctor before breast-feeding.

DRUG INTERACTIONS:

Your healthcare professionals (e.g., doctor or pharmacist) may already be aware of any possible drug interactions and may be monitoring you for it. Do not start, stop or change the dosage of any medicine before checking with them first.

Avoid taking MAO inhibitors (e.g., furazolidone, isocarboxazid, linezolid, moclobemide, phenelzine, procarbazine, selegiline, tranylcypromine) within 2 weeks before or after treatment with this medication. In some cases, a serious, possibly fatal, drug interaction may occur. If you are currently using any of these medications, tell your doctor or pharmacist before starting this medication.

Before using this medication, tell your doctor or pharmacist of all prescription and nonprescription/herbal products you may use, especially of: "blood thinners" (e.g., warfarin), clonidine, guanethidine, phenylbutazone, drugs that can increase blood pressure (e.g., phenylephrine), anti-seizure drugs (e.g., phenobarbital, phenytoin, primidone), tricyclic antidepressants (e.g., imipramine, desipramine), SSRI antidepressants (e.g., fluoxetine, sertraline).

OVERDOSE:

If overdose is suspected, contact your local poison control center or emergency room immediately. US residents can call the US national poison hotline at 1-800-222-1222. Canadian residents should call their local poison control center directly. Symptoms of overdose may include: severe vomiting, persistent tremor, agitation, muscle twitching, seizures, loss of consciousness, confusion, hallucinations, sweating, flushing, severe headache, wide pupils.

NOTES:

Do not share this medication with others. It is against the law.

Laboratory and/or medical tests (e.g., blood pressure, growth monitoring in children requiring long-term therapy) should be performed periodically to monitor your progress or check for side

effects. Other laboratory tests (blood counts, platelets) may also be performed to check for side effects. Consult your doctor for more details.

Methylphenidate may help lessen inattention and hyperactivity ADHD symptoms such as not paying attention, making careless mistakes, not listening, being easily distracted, fidgeting, talking excessively, or interrupting others.

There are different brands and forms of this medication available. Not all are identical. Do not change brands or forms without consulting your doctor or pharmacist.

MISSED DOSE:

If you miss a dose, take it as soon as remembered and take any remaining doses at evenly spaced times. If it is near bedtime or near time for the next dose, skip that dose and resume your regular dosing schedule. Do not double the dose to catch up.

STORAGE:

Store the US product at room temperature between 59-86 degrees F (15-30 degrees C).

Store the Canadian product between 36-86 degrees F (2-30 degrees C).

Store the medication away from heat, moisture, and sunlight. Do not store in the bathroom. Keep all medicines away from children and pets.