

UpToDate® Official reprint from UpToDate®
www.uptodate.com ©2021 UpToDate, Inc. and/or its affiliates. All Rights Reserved.



The content on the UpToDate website is not intended nor recommended as a substitute for medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. Always seek the advice of your own physician or other qualified health care professional regarding any medical questions or conditions. The use of UpToDate content is governed by the [UpToDate Terms of Use](#). ©2021 UpToDate, Inc. All rights reserved.

Nitrofurantoin: Patient drug information

Copyright 1978-2021 Lexicomp, Inc. All rights reserved.

(For additional information [see "Nitrofurantoin: Drug information"](#) and [see "Nitrofurantoin: Pediatric drug information"](#))

Brand Names: US

Furadantin [DSC]; Macrobid; Macrochantin

Brand Names: Canada

Auro-Nitrofurantoin; Macrobid; PMS-Nitrofurantoin BID; TEVA-Nitrofurantoin

What is this drug used for?

- It is used to treat or prevent a urinary tract infection (UTI).

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

For all patients taking 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 kidney disease.
- If you have trouble passing urine.
- If this drug caused liver problems before.
- If you are more than 38 weeks pregnant.

Children:

- If your child is younger than 1 month of age. Do not give this drug to an infant younger than 1 month of age.

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.
- Be careful if you have G6PD deficiency. Anemia may happen.
- This drug may affect certain lab tests. Tell all of your health care providers and lab workers that you take this drug.
- Do not use longer than you have been told. A second infection may happen.
- Very bad and sometimes deadly lung problems have rarely happened with this drug. Most of the time, this happens in people who are taking this drug for 6 months or longer. Lung problems may happen without warning signs. If you take this drug for a long time, your doctor will watch your lung function. Call your doctor right away if you have fever, chills, chest pain, a cough that is not normal, or trouble breathing or other breathing problems.
- 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 a pancreas problem (pancreatitis) like very bad stomach pain, very bad back pain, or very bad upset stomach or throwing up.
- Signs of lupus like a rash on the cheeks or other body parts, sunburn easy, muscle or joint pain, chest pain or shortness of breath, or swelling in the arms or legs.
- Not able to control eye movements.
- 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.
- Liver problems have rarely happened with this drug. Sometimes, this has been deadly. 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.
- Nerve problems have happened with this drug. Sometimes, these nerve problems have been very bad, have not gone away, or have been deadly. The chance of nerve problems may be higher in people who have kidney problems, anemia, diabetes, electrolyte problems, or low vitamin B. Call your doctor right away if you have a burning, numbness, or tingling feeling that is not normal.

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.
- Upset stomach or throwing up.
- Not hungry.
- Stomach pain or diarrhea.
- Feeling dizzy, sleepy, tired, or weak.
- Some people have had hair loss with this drug. This went back to normal when this drug was stopped.
- This drug may change the color of the urine to brown. This is normal and not harmful.

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.

All products:

- Take this drug with food.
- Keep taking this drug as you have been told by your doctor or other health care provider, even if you feel well.
- Drink lots of noncaffeine liquids unless told to drink less liquid by your doctor.
- Do not take antacids that have magnesium trisilicate in them with this drug.

Liquid (suspension):

- 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.

What do I do if I miss a dose?

- 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.

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

All products:

- Store at room temperature 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.

Liquid (suspension):

- Store in original container.
- Do not freeze.
- Protect from light.
- Throw away any unused portion after 30 days.

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.

Use of UpToDate is subject to the [Subscription and License Agreement](#).

Topic 10912 Version 166.0

→