

# Non-Potassium Sparing Diuretics

Information for patients



UHN

## Read this medicine fact sheet to learn about:

- What this medicine is
- Why you need to take it
- What side effects to watch for

## What is the name of my medicine?

Non-potassium sparing diuretics (pronounced di – uret – ics)

## Other names for this medicine:

Generic Name	Brand Name
Chlorthalidone	Apo-Chlorthalidone®
Hydrochlorothiazide	Apo-Hydro®, generics
Indapamide	Lozide®, generics
Metolazone	Zaroxolyn®
Bumetanide	Burinex®
Furosemide	Lasix®, Apo-Furosemide®
Ethacrynic acid	Edecrin ®

**Please note:** Chlorthalidone, hydrochlorothiazide and indapamide may be combined with another medicine in a single tablet.

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## **Why do I need to take this medicine?**

- To lower blood pressure if you have high blood pressure (hypertension).
- To treat fluid build up that can happen if you have heart failure or other health problems. This medicine reduces the amount of fluid in your body by making your kidneys increase their flow of urine (pee).

Diuretics are also sometimes called "water pills". Non-potassium sparing diuretics may cause potassium (a mineral in your body) to be lost along with the fluid.

- If you need this medicine for another problem, your health care provider will give you more information.

## **What do I need to know when taking this medicine?**

- Don't change the dose or stop taking this medicine without talking to your doctor or pharmacist, even if you feel well.
- This medicine may cause your body to lose potassium. Your doctor may prescribe a potassium supplement or another medicine to prevent potassium loss.
- Your doctor may tell you to weigh yourself at the same time each day. Changes in your weight can show whether or not you are losing fluid.
- Some diuretics can raise your blood sugar level. If you have diabetes, ask your doctor how this will affect the way you manage your diabetes.
- This medicine can make you feel dizzy. To avoid feeling dizzy, stand up slowly if you have been sitting or lying down. Drinking alcohol can make dizziness worse. Do not drive a car or use heavy machines if this medicine makes you feel dizzy.
- This medicine may make your skin more sensitive to sunlight. Try to stay out of direct sunlight.
  - Use a sunscreen that is SPF 30 or higher. Ask your pharmacist to help you choose the sunscreen that is best for you.
  - Wear a hat, sunglasses and clothes that will protect you from the sun.
  - Don't use a tanning bed.

- Talk to your doctor if you are pregnant or plan to become pregnant.
- **Always check with your doctor or pharmacist before taking any other medicine.** This includes:
  - medicines prescribed by a doctor or bought in a pharmacy
  - vitamins or herbal remedies
  - supplements and salt substitutes that may contain potassium

### **What are the side effects of this medicine?**

- feeling dizzy
- constipation
- can cause your body to lose potassium, sodium and magnesium
- upset stomach
- loss of appetite
- going pee more often
- your skin is more sensitive to sunlight
- can increase the uric acid level in your body. This can cause a health problem called gout (swollen, hot, red, painful joints).

Some side effects may go away as your body gets used to the medicine.

### **Call your doctor right away if you:**

- have a skin rash
- feel faint or fainted
- feel unusually tired or weak
- are vomiting
- have muscle cramps
- have an irregular heartbeat
- have difficulty breathing or swallowing
- have a very dry mouth or dry eyes

- feel very thirsty
- notice you are not going pee very often or not at all
- have a sudden and large drop in your weight
- have unusual bleeding or bruising
- feel confused, have a loss of hearing or ringing in your ears

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

- Take a missed dose as soon as you remember.
- If it is close to the time for your next dose, skip the missed dose and take the next dose at your normal time.
- Do not take 2 doses at the same time.

### **Who do I talk to if I have a problem or question?**

This fact sheet does not cover all of the side effects that may happen. If you are concerned about any side effects, please ask your doctor or pharmacist for more information or advice.

If you are not sure what to do when taking this medicine, talk to your doctor or pharmacist.

This fact sheet was created by the University Health Network Pharmacy Department. It is for your information only. It shouldn't replace talking with your pharmacist. Please talk to your pharmacist or other health care professional if you have any questions about this medicine.