

Dexamfetamine (dexamphetamine) or methylphenidate

Ritalin®, Ritalin LA®, Concerta®, Artige®

What are dexamfetamine and methylphenidate?

Dexamfetamine and methylphenidate are from a group of medications called central nervous system stimulants. These medicines are only available with a prescription from a consultant paediatrician or a child psychiatrist.

What are they for?

They are used mainly for the condition called Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) but may be used in other conditions such as narcolepsy (sudden attacks of uncontrollable sleepiness). They help to focus attention, shut out distraction and allow the child to concentrate.

How to take this medication

It is important that this medication is taken only as directed and is not given to other people, as the dose may vary for each patient.

The dose is usually taken in the morning. Further doses may be given throughout the day, with the last dose of immediate release preparations usually given before 4.00pm.

Swallow the tablets or capsules with a glass of water. Slow release preparation should be swallowed whole, however if your child has difficulty swallowing the Ritalin LA® capsules they may be opened and the contents sprinkled on cold, soft food (for example, apple sauce). The medications are best taken with or after food so as not to affect appetite.

What to do if a dose is missed

If it is almost time for the next dose, skip the one missed and give the next dose at the usual time. Do not try to make up for a missed dose by giving more than one dose at a time as it can increase the risk of unwanted side effects.

Storing the medication

It is important to keep methylphenidate and dexamfetamine locked away out of reach of children. Do not keep the medicine in the bathroom, near the kitchen sink or in other damp, warm places because this may make the medication less effective.

Use of other medication

Dexamfetamine and methylphenidate may interact with a number of other medications so it is important to ask your doctor or pharmacist before giving any other medicine. This includes those that you buy without a prescription from a pharmacy, supermarket or health food shop.



Medicines that may interact:

- Warfarin.
- Certain anticonvulsant medications and antidepressant medications.
- Medicines that increase blood pressure.
- Certain medicines used to treat mental illness such as schizophrenia or psychotic disorders.
- Some foods/medicines that may affect the pH of the stomach or urine such as vitamin C, fruit juice, antacids (for example Mylanta®).
- Some medications for coughs and colds, sinus problems, hayfever or other allergies.

Important information

- Do not stop giving these medications without checking with your child's doctor. When it is no longer required, your doctor may want to slowly decrease the medication before stopping completely.
- Dexamfetamine or methylphenidate can interfere with sleep. The last dose of the day for immediate release products should be taken at least four hours before bedtime.
- These medications may make your child dizzy at first. Care must be taken with activities.
- After stopping the medications, your child's body may need time to adjust. During this period, check with your doctor if you notice unusual behaviour, tiredness, weakness or depression.
- It is best to time doses to avoid having to take medicine at school.
- Please discuss with your doctor or pharmacist if your child has a lactose or gluten intolerance.

Possible side effects

To avoid stomach upsets, medication should be taken with meals. Loss of appetite and nervousness can happen. However, this usually goes away with time. Contact your child's doctor as soon as possible if any of the following side effects occur:

- Swelling of the lips, face or tongue, shortness of breath, wheezing or troubled breathing.
- Uncontrolled movements of the body, or tics.
- Weakness or paralysis of limbs or face, difficulty speaking, fainting.
- New or worsening aggressive behaviour.
- Yellow colour to the skin or eyes, dark coloured urine or light coloured bowel motions.
- Unusual bleeding or bruising, rash, itching, blisters or peeling of skin.
- Fever, sweating, fast heartbeat, muscle stiffness.
- Chest pain, severe or persistent headache.

Commercially available dosage forms and strengths

- Methylphenidate
 - Immediate release tablets in 10mg (Artige®, Ritalin®).
 - Slow release capsules in 20mg, 30mg, 40mg (Ritalin LA®).
 - Slow release tablets in 18mg, 27mg, 36mg or 54mg (Concerta®).
- Dexamfetamine (dexamphetamine) immediate release tablets in 5mg.

The PCH Pharmacy will advise you if they manufacture any additional dosage forms to the above.

If you have any concerns contact your child's doctor or the PCH Pharmacy Department.

Dispensary: 6456 0190

Paediatric Medicines Information Service: 6456 0190 – select option 1

In case of overdose or poisoning contact the Poisons Information Centre on 13 11 26.



Government of **Western Australia**
Child and Adolescent Health Service



Child and Adolescent Health Service
15 Hospital Avenue, Nedlands, WA, 6009.
Telephone: (08) 6456 2222
Produced by: Pharmacy
Ref: 588 © CAHS 2016 Revised 2022

This document can be made available in alternative formats on request for a person with a disability.

Disclaimer: This publication is for general education and information purposes. Contact a qualified healthcare professional for any medical advice needed.

© State of Western Australia, Child and Adolescent Health Service.