

ELECTROLYTES & AGENTS FOR CALORIC & WATER BALANCE



MINISTRY OF HEALTH
SINGAPORE



CALCIUM

ABOUT your medicine

The body needs calcium to make strong bones and teeth, and also to ensure proper functioning of your heart, muscles and nervous system. Individuals who are unable to obtain sufficient calcium in their regular diet or who have a need for more calcium may take calcium supplements. These supplements are used to prevent or treat conditions that may cause low calcium in the blood (hypocalcaemia).

Pregnant women, nursing mothers, children, and adolescents may need extra calcium despite having a calcium-rich diet. Adult women may also take calcium supplements to prevent the bone disease, osteoporosis. Osteoporosis, which causes thin, porous, easily-broken bones, may occur in women after menopause and in some elderly men too.

HOW should I take the medicine?

The amount of calcium needed to meet recommended daily intake is different in different individuals. Drink a full glass of water when taking a calcium supplement. This supplement is best taken 1 to 1½ hours after meals, unless otherwise stated by your doctor.

*Keep all medication out of reach of children
Discard all medication that has expired or is no longer required*

What should I do if I FORGET a dose?

If you miss a dose or forget to take your medicine, take it as soon as you can. However, if it is almost time for your next dose, wait until then to take the medicine and skip the missed dose. Do not double your dose or take extra medicine to make up for a missed dose. If you have missed several doses, please call your physician to check what you should do.

What are the possible SIDE-EFFECTS of the medicine?

Calcium supplements are generally well tolerated. Side-effects may be more likely to occur if calcium is taken in large doses over a long time. These effects include constipation, dryness of mouth, nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain and headache.

What PRECAUTIONS should I take?

Do not take calcium supplements within 1 to 2 hours of taking other medicines by mouth.

Do not take other medicines or dietary supplements containing large amounts of calcium, phosphates, magnesium or vitamin D unless directed by your doctor.

Do not consume large amounts of alcohol or caffeine-containing beverages (more than 8 cups of coffee or tea daily).

MAGNESIUM

ABOUT your medicine

Magnesium is required for maintaining the electrical stability of cell membranes. It is administered as a dietary supplement for individuals who are deficient in magnesium. Although a balanced diet usually provides sufficient magnesium for the body, supplements may be needed by patients who are deficient in magnesium because of illness or due to treatment with certain medicines. Lack of magnesium may lead to irritability, muscle weakness and irregular heartbeat.

HOW should I take the medicine?

Magnesium supplements should be taken with meals. Taking magnesium supplements on an empty stomach may cause diarrhoea.

What should I do if I FORGET a dose?

If you miss a dose or forget to take your medicine, take it as soon as you can. However, if it is almost time for your next dose, wait until then to take the medicine and skip the missed dose. Do not double your dose or take extra medicine to make up for a missed dose. If you have missed several doses, please call your physician to check what you should do.

What are the possible SIDE-EFFECTS of the medicine?

Magnesium supplements are generally well-tolerated. Some patients may experience diarrhoea. Check with your doctor if this continues or is bothersome.

ORAL REHYDRATION SALTS

ABOUT your medicine

Oral rehydration salts are used to treat or prevent dehydration (loss of too much salt and water from the body) that may occur with severe diarrhoea, especially in babies and young children. This medicine does not stop diarrhoea but serves to replace water and some important salts (electrolytes) that are lost from the body during diarrhoea e.g. sodium and potassium.

HOW should I take the medicine?

Dissolve the powder or effervescent tablet completely in one full glass of cool water, immediately before use. Stir the solution until all the powder or tablet is dissolved.

What should I do if I FORGET a dose?

If you miss a dose or forget to take your medicine, take it as soon as you can. However, if it is almost time for your next dose, wait until then to take the medicine and skip the

missed dose. Do not double your dose or take extra medicine to make up for a missed dose. If you have missed several doses, please call your physician to check what you should do.

What are the possible SIDE-EFFECTS of the medicine?

Vomiting is one of the possible side-effect of oral rehydration salts.

What PRECAUTIONS should I take?

Check with your doctor if your diarrhoea does not improve in 1 or 2 days. Signs of dehydration include severe thirst, decrease in the amount and frequency of urination, dizziness, weakness and weight loss.

POTASSIUM CHLORIDE

ABOUT your medicine

Potassium is essential to maintain essential body functions. Although a balanced diet usually supplies all the potassium your body requires, you may need supplements if you do not have enough potassium in your regular diet or have lost too much potassium because of illness or treatment with certain medicines.

Lack of potassium may cause muscle weakness, irregular heartbeat, nausea or vomiting. Since taking too much potassium is undesirable, you should take potassium supplements only if directed by your doctor.

HOW should I take the medicine?

Swallow the tablet whole with a full glass of water. Do not chew or suck the tablet. Take the tablet immediately after meals or with food to lessen the possibility of stomach upset or laxative action.

