



captured 7/31/13

Vicodin

Generic Name: acetaminophen and hydrocodone (a SEET a MIN oh fen and hye droe KOE done)

Brand Names: *Anexsia, Co-Gesic, Hycet, Liquicet, Lorcet, Lorcet Plus, Lortab, Maxidone, Norco, Polygesic, Stagesic, Vicodin, Xodol, Zamacet, Zolvit, Zydone*

[Overview](#)[Side Effects](#)[Dosage](#)[Interactions](#)[For Professionals](#)[More...](#)

What is Vicodin?

Vicodin contains a combination of acetaminophen and hydrocodone. Hydrocodone is in a group of drugs called opioid pain relievers. An opioid is sometimes called a narcotic.

Acetaminophen is a less potent pain reliever that increases the effects of hydrocodone.

Vicodin is used to relieve moderate to severe pain.

Vicodin may also be used for purposes not listed in this medication guide.

Important information about Vicodin?

Vicodin may impair your thinking or reactions. Avoid driving or operating machinery until you know how Vicodin will affect you. Avoid drinking alcohol. It may increase your risk of liver damage while taking acetaminophen.

Tell your doctor if you have ever had alcoholic liver disease (cirrhosis) or if you drink more than 3 alcoholic beverages per day. You may not be able to take medicine that contains acetaminophen. Do not take more of Vicodin than is recommended. An overdose of acetaminophen can damage your liver or cause death.

Tell your doctor if Vicodin seems to stop working as well in relieving your pain. Hydrocodone may be habit-forming and should be used only by the person it was prescribed for. Keep the medication in a secure place where others cannot get to it.

Ask a doctor or pharmacist before using any other cold, allergy, pain, or sleep medication. Acetaminophen (sometimes abbreviated as APAP) is contained in many combination medicines. Taking certain products together can cause you to get too much acetaminophen which can lead to a fatal overdose. Check the label to see if a medicine contains acetaminophen or APAP.

Before taking Vicodin

Do not use Vicodin if you are allergic to acetaminophen (Tylenol) or hydrocodone. Tell your doctor if you have ever had alcoholic liver disease (cirrhosis) or if you drink more than 3 alcoholic beverages per day. You may not be able to take medicine that contains acetaminophen.

To make sure you can safely take Vicodin, tell your doctor if you have any of these other conditions:

- asthma, COPD, sleep apnea, or other breathing disorders;
- liver or kidney disease;

- a history of head injury or brain tumor;
- low blood pressure;
- a stomach or intestinal disorder;
- underactive thyroid;
- Addison's disease or other adrenal gland disorder;
- curvature of the spine;
- mental illness; or
- a history of drug or alcohol addiction.

Hydrocodone may be habit forming and should be used only by the person it was prescribed for. Never share Vicodin with another person, especially someone with a history of drug abuse or addiction. Keep the medication in a place where others cannot get to it.

FDA pregnancy category C. It is not known whether Vicodin is harmful to an unborn baby, but it could cause breathing problems or addiction/withdrawal symptoms in a newborn. Tell your doctor if you are pregnant or plan to become pregnant while using Vicodin. Acetaminophen and hydrocodone can pass into breast milk and may harm a nursing baby. Do not use Vicodin without telling your doctor if you are breast-feeding a baby.

See also: [Vicodin pregnancy and breastfeeding warnings](#) (in more detail)

How should I take Vicodin?

Take Vicodin exactly as prescribed. Never take Vicodin in larger amounts, or for longer than recommended by your doctor. An overdose of acetaminophen can damage your liver or cause death.

One Vicodin tablet may contain up to 750 mg of acetaminophen (Vicodin ES). Know the amount of acetaminophen in the specific product you are taking.

Follow the directions on your prescription label. Tell your doctor if the medicine seems to stop working as well in relieving your pain.

Drink 6 to 8 full glasses of water daily to help prevent constipation while you are taking Vicodin. Ask your doctor about ways to increase the fiber in your diet. Do not use a stool softener (laxative) without first asking your doctor. Do not stop using Vicodin suddenly after long-term use, or you could have unpleasant withdrawal symptoms. Ask your doctor how to avoid withdrawal symptoms when you stop using Vicodin.

Acetaminophen can cause false results with certain lab tests for glucose (sugar) in the urine. Talk to your doctor if you are diabetic and you notice changes in your glucose levels during treatment.

If you need surgery, tell the surgeon ahead of time that you are using Vicodin. You may need to stop using the medicine for a short time.

Store Vicodin at room temperature away from moisture and heat.

Keep track of number of Vicodin tablets used from each new bottle. Hydrocodone is a drug of abuse and you should be aware if anyone is using your medicine improperly or without a prescription.

What happens if I miss a dose?

Since Vicodin is taken as needed, you may not be on a dosing schedule. If you are taking the medication regularly, take the missed dose as soon as you remember. Skip the missed dose if it is almost time for your next scheduled dose. Do not use extra medicine to make up the missed dose.

What happens if I overdose?

Seek emergency medical attention or call the Poison Help line at 1-800-222-1222. An overdose of Vicodin can be fatal.

The first signs of an acetaminophen overdose include loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting, stomach pain, sweating, and confusion or weakness. Later symptoms may include pain in your upper stomach, dark urine, and yellowing of your skin or the whites of your eyes.

Overdose symptoms may also include extreme drowsiness, pinpoint pupils, cold and clammy skin, muscle weakness, fainting, weak pulse, slow heart rate, coma, blue lips, shallow breathing, or no breathing

What should I avoid while taking Vicodin?

Vicodin may impair your thinking or reactions. Avoid driving or operating machinery until you know how Vicodin will affect you. Ask a doctor or pharmacist before using any other cold, allergy, pain, or sleep medication. Acetaminophen (sometimes abbreviated as APAP) is contained in many combination medicines. Taking certain products together can cause you to get too much acetaminophen which can lead to a fatal overdose. Check the label to see if a medicine contains acetaminophen or APAP. Avoid drinking alcohol. It may increase your risk of liver damage while taking acetaminophen.

Vicodin side effects

Get emergency medical help if you have any of these signs of an allergic reaction to Vicodin: hives; difficulty breathing; swelling of your face, lips, tongue, or throat.

Call your doctor at once if you have any of these serious side effects while taking Vicodin:

- shallow breathing, slow heartbeat;
- feeling light-headed, fainting;
- confusion, fear, unusual thoughts or behavior;
- seizure (convulsions);
- problems with urination; or
- nausea, upper stomach pain, itching, loss of appetite, dark urine, clay-colored stools, jaundice (yellowing of the skin or eyes).

Less serious Vicodin side effects may include:

- anxiety, dizziness, drowsiness;
- mild nausea, vomiting, upset stomach, constipation;
- headache, mood changes;
- blurred vision;
- ringing in your ears; or
- dry mouth.

This is not a complete list of side effects and others may occur. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.

See also: [Vicodin side effects](#) (in more detail)

What other drugs will affect Vicodin?

Do not take Vicodin with any other narcotic pain medications, sedatives, tranquilizers, sleeping pills, muscle relaxers, or other medicines that can make you sleepy or slow your breathing. Dangerous side effects may result.

Tell your doctor about all other medicines you use, especially:

- an antidepressant such as amitriptyline (Elavil, Vanatrip, Limbitrol), doxepin (Sinequan), nortriptyline (Pamelor), and others;
- an MAO inhibitor such as furazolidone (Furoxone), isocarboxazid (Marplan), phenelzine (Nardil), rasagiline (Azilect), selegiline (Eldepryl, Emsam, Zelapar), or tranylcypromine (Parnate);
- atropine (Donnatal, and others), benztropine (Cogentin), dimenhydrinate (Dramamine), glycopyrrolate (Robinul), mepenzolate (Cantil), methscopolamine (Pamine), or scopolamine (Transderm-Scop);
- bladder or urinary medications such as darifenacin (Enablex), flavoxate (Urispas), oxybutynin (Ditropan, Oxytrol), tolterodine (Detrol), or solifenacin (Vesicare);
- a bronchodilator such as ipratropium (Atrovent) or tiotropium (Spiriva); or
- irritable bowel medications such as dicyclomine (Bentyl), hyoscyamine (Anaspaz, Cystospaz, Levsin, and others), or propantheline (Pro-Banthine).

This list is not complete and other drugs may interact with Vicodin. Tell your doctor about all medications you use. This includes prescription, over-the-counter, vitamin, and herbal products. Do not start a new medication without telling your doctor.

Next Page → [Side Effects](#)

More about Vicodin (acetaminophen / hydrocodone)

Consumer resources

- [Vicodin tablets and capsules](#)
- [Vicodin](#) (Advanced Reading)
- *Other brands: [Norco](#), [Lortab](#), [Anexsia](#), [Hycet](#), [More \(7\)](#) »*

Professional resources

- [Vicodin](#) (FDA)
- *Other brands: [Norco](#), [Lortab](#), [Lorcet Plus](#), [Xodol](#), [More \(9\)](#) »*

Other Vicodin formulations

- [Vicodin ES](#)
- [Vicodin HP](#)

Compare Vicodin with other treatments for:

- [Back Pain](#)
- [Pain](#)
- [Rheumatoid Arthritis](#)

Where can I get more information?

- Your pharmacist can provide more information about Vicodin.

Remember, keep this and all other medicines out of the reach of children, never share your medicines with others, and use Vicodin only for the indication prescribed.

Disclaimer: Every effort has been made to ensure that the information provided is accurate, up-to-date, and complete, but no guarantee is made to that effect. Drug information contained herein may be time sensitive. Multum's drug information is an informational resource designed to assist licensed healthcare practitioners in caring for their patients and/or to serve consumers viewing this service as a supplement to, and not a substitute for, the expertise, skill, knowledge and judgment of healthcare practitioners. The absence of a warning for a given drug or drug combination in no way should be construed to indicate that the drug or drug combination is safe, effective or appropriate for any given patient. The information contained herein is not intended to cover all possible uses, directions, precautions, warnings, drug interactions, allergic reactions, or adverse effects.

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