

Health Topics

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ESPAÑOL

## Vancomycin

(van koe mye' sin)

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### Why is this medication prescribed?

Vancomycin is used to treat colitis (inflammation of the intestine caused by certain bacteria) that may occur after antibiotic treatment. Vancomycin is in a class of medications called glycopeptide antibiotics. It works by killing bacteria in the intestines. Vancomycin will not kill bacteria or treat infections in any other part of the body when taken by mouth. Antibiotics will not work for colds, flu, or other viral infections.

### How should this medicine be used?

Vancomycin comes as a capsule to take by mouth. It is usually taken 3-4 times a day for 7-10 days. To help you remember to take vancomycin, take it around the same times every day. Follow the directions on your prescription label carefully, and ask your doctor or pharmacist to explain any part you do not understand. Take vancomycin exactly as directed. Do not take more or less of it or take it more often than prescribed by your doctor.

Take vancomycin until you finish the prescription, even if you feel better. If you stop taking vancomycin too soon or miss doses, your infection may not be completely cured and bacteria may become resistant to antibiotics.

### Other uses for this medicine [Return to top](#)

This medication should not be prescribed for other uses; ask your doctor or pharmacist for more information.

### What special precautions should I follow? [Return to top](#)

Before taking vancomycin,

- tell your doctor and pharmacist if you are allergic to vancomycin, or any other medications.
- tell your doctor and pharmacist what prescription and nonprescription medications, vitamins, nutritional supplements, and herbal products you are taking. Be sure to mention amikacin (Amikin), amphotericin B (Fungizone), bacitracin, cisplatin (Platinol), colistin, gentamicin (Garamycin), kanamycin (Kantrex), polymyxin B, streptomycin, and tobramycin (Nebcin).
- tell your doctor if you have or have ever had inflammatory bowel disease (swelling of the intestine that can cause painful cramps or diarrhea), including Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis; hearing loss; or kidney disease.
- tell your doctor if you are pregnant, plan to become pregnant, or are breast-feeding. If you become pregnant while taking Vancomycin, call your doctor.

### What special dietary instructions should I follow? [Return to top](#)

Unless your doctor tells you otherwise, continue your normal diet.

### What should I do if I forget a dose? [Return to top](#)

Take the missed dose as soon as you remember it. However, if it is almost time for the next dose, skip the missed dose and continue your regular dosing schedule. Do not take a double dose to make up for a missed one.

### What side effects can this medication cause? [Return to top](#)

Vancomycin may cause side effects. Tell your doctor if this symptom is severe or does not go away:

- upset stomach

Some side effects can be serious. The following symptoms are uncommon, but if you experience any of them, call your doctor immediately:

- sore throat, fever, chills, and other signs of infection
- hives
- skin rash
- itching
- difficulty breathing or swallowing
- redness of the skin above the waist
- pain and muscle tightness of the chest and back
- unusual bleeding or bruising
- fainting
- dizziness
- blurred vision
- ringing in the ears

If you experience a serious side effect, you or your doctor may send a report to the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) MedWatch Adverse Event Reporting program online [at <http://www.fda.gov/Safety/MedWatch>] or by phone [1-800-332-1088].

### What storage conditions are needed for this medicine? [Return to top](#)

Keep this medication in the container it came in, tightly closed, and out of reach of children. Store it at room temperature and away from excess heat and moisture (not in the bathroom). Throw away any medication that is outdated or no longer needed. Talk to your pharmacist about the proper disposal of your medication.

### In case of emergency/overdose [Return to top](#)

In case of overdose, call your local poison control center at 1-800-222-1222. If the victim has collapsed or is not breathing, call local emergency services at 911.

### What other information should I know? [Return to top](#)

Keep all appointments with your doctor.

Do not let anyone else take your medication. Your prescription is probably not refillable. If you still have symptoms of infection after you finish the vancomycin, call your doctor.

It is important for you to keep a written list of all of the prescription and nonprescription (over-the-counter) medicines you are taking, as well as any products such as vitamins, minerals, or other dietary supplements. You should bring this list with you each time you visit a doctor or if you are admitted to a hospital. It is also important information to carry with you in case of emergencies.

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[Brand names](#) [Return to top](#)

- Vancocin®

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