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Ranitidine

Generic Name: ranitidine (ra NI ti deen)

Brand names: *Taladine, Zantac*

What is ranitidine?

Ranitidine is in a group of drugs called histamine-2 blockers. Ranitidine works by reducing the amount of acid your stomach produces.

Ranitidine is used to treat and prevent ulcers in the stomach and intestines. It also treats conditions in which the stomach produces too much acid, such as Zollinger-Ellison syndrome. Ranitidine also treats gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD) and other conditions in which acid backs up from the stomach into the esophagus, causing heartburn.

Important information about ranitidine

Using ranitidine may increase your risk of developing pneumonia. Symptoms of pneumonia include chest pain, fever, feeling short of breath, and coughing up green or yellow mucus. Talk with your doctor about your specific risk of developing pneumonia.

Do not use this medication if you are allergic to ranitidine.

Ask a doctor or pharmacist if it is safe for you to take this medicine if you have kidney disease, liver disease, or porphyria.

Heartburn is often confused with the first symptoms of a heart attack. Seek emergency medical attention if you have chest pain or heavy feeling, pain spreading to the arm or shoulder, nausea, sweating, and a general ill feeling.

Ranitidine granules and effervescent tablets must be dissolved in water before you take them. Your doctor may recommend an antacid to help relieve pain. Carefully follow your doctor's directions about the type of antacid to use, and when to use it. Avoid drinking alcohol. It can increase the risk of damage to your stomach. It may take up to 8 weeks of using this medicine before your ulcer heals. For best results, keep using the medication as directed. Talk with your doctor if your symptoms do not improve after 6 weeks of treatment.

Before using ranitidine

Do not use this medication if you are allergic to ranitidine.

Heartburn is often confused with the first symptoms of a heart attack. Seek emergency medical attention if you have chest pain or heavy feeling, pain spreading to the arm or shoulder, nausea, sweating, and a general ill feeling.

Ask a doctor or pharmacist if it is safe for you to take ranitidine if you have:

- kidney disease;
- liver disease; or
- porphyria.

FDA pregnancy category B. Ranitidine is not expected to be harmful to an unborn baby. Tell your doctor if you are pregnant or plan to become pregnant during treatment. Ranitidine passes into breast milk. Do not take ranitidine without telling your

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doctor if you are breast-feeding a baby.

Using ranitidine may increase your risk of developing pneumonia. Symptoms of pneumonia include chest pain, fever, feeling short of breath, and coughing up green or yellow mucus. Talk with your doctor about your specific risk of developing pneumonia.

The ranitidine effervescent tablet may contain phenylalanine. Talk to your doctor before using this form of ranitidine if you have phenylketonuria (PKU).

How should I take ranitidine?

Take ranitidine exactly as directed on the label, or as prescribed by your doctor. Do not use in larger or smaller amounts or for longer than recommended.

Your doctor may recommend an antacid to help relieve pain. Carefully follow your doctor's directions about the type of antacid to use, and when to use it.

Do not crush, chew, or break the ranitidine effervescent tablet, and do not allow it to dissolve on your tongue. The 25-milligram effervescent tablet must be dissolved in at least 1 teaspoon of water before swallowing. The 150-milligram effervescent tablet should be dissolved in 6 to 8 ounces of water.

Allow the ranitidine effervescent tablet to dissolve completely in the water, and then drink the entire mixture. If you are giving this medicine to a child, you may draw the liquid mixture into a medicine dropper and empty the dropper into the child's mouth.

Ranitidine granules should be mixed with 6 to 8 ounces of water before drinking.

Measure ranitidine liquid with a special dose-measuring spoon or cup, not a regular table spoon. If you do not have a dose-measuring device, ask your pharmacist for one.

It may take up to 8 weeks before your ulcer heals. Keep using the medication as directed and tell your doctor if your symptoms do not improve after 6 weeks of treatment.

This medication can cause unusual results with certain medical tests. Tell any doctor who treats you that you are using ranitidine.

Store ranitidine at room temperature away from moisture, heat, and light.

What happens if I miss a dose?

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 take 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.

Overdose symptoms may include lack of coordination, feeling light-headed, or fainting.

What should I avoid while taking ranitidine?

Avoid drinking alcohol. It can increase the risk of damage to your stomach.

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Ranitidine side effects

Stop using ranitidine and get emergency medical help if you have any of these signs of an allergic reaction to ranitidine: hives; difficulty breathing; swelling of your face, lips, tongue, or throat. Stop taking ranitidine and call your doctor at once if you have a serious side effect such as:

- chest pain, fever, feeling short of breath, coughing up green or yellow mucus;
- easy bruising or bleeding, unusual weakness;
- fast or slow heart rate;
- problems with your vision;
- fever, sore throat, and headache with a severe blistering, peeling, and red skin rash; or
- nausea, stomach pain, low fever, loss of appetite, dark urine, clay-colored stools, jaundice (yellowing of the skin or eyes).

Less serious ranitidine side effects may include:

- headache (may be severe);
- drowsiness, dizziness;
- sleep problems (insomnia);
- decreased sex drive, impotence, or difficulty having an orgasm; or
- swollen or tender breasts (in men);
- nausea, vomiting, stomach pain; or
- diarrhea or constipation.

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.

What other drugs will affect ranitidine?

Before taking ranitidine, tell your doctor if you are taking triazolam (Halcion). You may not be able to use ranitidine, or you may need dosage adjustments or special tests during treatment.

There may be other drugs that can interact with ranitidine. 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.

Where can I get more information?

- Your pharmacist can provide more information about ranitidine.
- Remember, keep this and all other medicines out of the reach of children, never share your medicines with others, and use this medication only for the indication prescribed.
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