

**REVIEWED**

By Chris at 1:12 pm, Feb 22, 2016

[Home](#) → [Drugs, Herbs and Supplements](#) → GemfibrozilURL of this page: <https://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/druginfo/meds/a686002.html>

## Gemfibrozil

pronounced as (jem fi' broe zil)

### Why is this medication prescribed?

Gemfibrozil is used with diet changes (restriction of cholesterol and fat intake) to reduce the amount of cholesterol and triglycerides (other fatty substances) in the blood in certain people with very high triglycerides who are at risk of pancreatic disease (conditions affecting the pancreas, a gland that produces fluid to break down food and hormones to control blood sugar). Gemfibrozil is also used in people with a combination of low high-density lipoprotein (HDL; 'good cholesterol') levels and high low-density lipoprotein (LDL; 'bad cholesterol') and triglyceride levels to reduce the risk of heart disease. Gemfibrozil is in a class of lipid-regulating medications called fibrates. It works by reducing the production of triglycerides in the liver.

### How should this medicine be used?

Gemfibrozil comes as a tablet to take by mouth. It is usually taken twice a day, 30 minutes before the morning and evening meals. Take gemfibrozil at 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 gemfibrozil exactly as directed. Do not take more or less of it or take it more often than prescribed by your doctor.

Gemfibrozil controls high triglycerides and low HDL but does not cure them. Continue to take gemfibrozil even if you feel well. Do not stop taking gemfibrozil without talking to your doctor.

### Other uses for this medicine

This medication may be prescribed for other uses; ask your doctor or pharmacist for more information.

### What special precautions should I follow?

#### Before taking gemfibrozil,

- tell your doctor and pharmacist if you are allergic to gemfibrozil or any other medications.

- tell your doctor if you are taking simvastatin (Zocor) or repaglinide (Prandin, in Prandimet). Your doctor will probably tell you not to take gemfibrozil while taking one or both of these medications.
- tell your doctor and pharmacist what prescription and nonprescription medications, vitamins, nutritional supplements, and herbal products you are taking or plan to take. Be sure to mention any of the following: anticoagulants ('blood thinners') such as warfarin (Coumadin); cholesterol-lowering medications (statins) such as atorvastatin (Lipitor), fluvastatin (Lescol), lovastatin (Mevacor), and pravastatin (Pravachol); and colchicine (Colcrys). Your doctor may need to change the doses of your medications or monitor you carefully for side effects.
- if you are taking colestipol, take this medication 2 hours before or 2 hours after gemfibrozil.
- tell your doctor if you have kidney, liver, or gallbladder disease. Your doctor may tell you not to take gemfibrozil.
- tell your doctor if you are pregnant, plan to become pregnant, or are breast-feeding. If you become pregnant while taking gemfibrozil, call your doctor.

## **What special dietary instructions should I follow?**

Eat a low-fat, low-cholesterol diet. Be sure to follow all exercise and dietary recommendations made by your doctor or dietitian. You can also visit the National Cholesterol Education Program (NCEP) website for additional dietary information at [http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/chol/chol\\_tlc.pdf](http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/chol/chol_tlc.pdf) [[http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/chol/chol\\_tlc.pdf](http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/chol/chol_tlc.pdf)] .

## **What should I do if I forget a dose?**

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?**

**Gemfibrozil may cause side effects. Tell your doctor if any of these symptoms are severe or do not go away:**

- stomach pain
- heartburn

**Some side effects can be serious. If you experience any of these symptoms, call your doctor immediately:**

- muscle pain, tenderness, or weakness
- blurred vision

A medication similar to gemfibrozil has caused cancer, gallbladder disease, and stomach pain leading to appendectomy. Talk to your doctor about the risks of taking this medication.

Gemfibrozil may cause other side effects. Call your doctor if you have any unusual problems while taking this medication.

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 (<http://www.fda.gov/Safety/MedWatch> [<http://www.fda.gov/Safety/MedWatch>] ) or by phone (1-800-332-1088).

## **What should I know about storage and disposal of this medication?**

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 light, 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**

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.

### **Symptoms of overdose may include:**

- stomach cramps
- diarrhea
- joint and muscle pain
- nausea
- vomiting

## **What other information should I know?**

Keep all appointments with your doctor and the laboratory. Your doctor will order certain lab tests to check your body's response to gemfibrozil.

Do not let anyone else take your medication. Ask your pharmacist any questions you have about refilling your prescription.

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.

## **Brand names**

- Lopid ®Last Revised - 08/15/2014



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Page last updated: 02 February 2016