

Learn about a once-monthly treatment for moderate to severe rheumatoid arthritis (RA).

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Relafen

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What is Relafen?

Relafen belongs to a group of drugs called nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs). It works by reducing hormones that cause inflammation and pain in the body.

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Relafen is used to treat pain or inflammation caused by arthritis.

Relafen may also be used for purposes other than those listed in this medication guide.

Important information about Relafen

Relafen can increase your risk of life-threatening heart or circulation problems, including heart attack or stroke. This risk will increase the longer you use Relafen. Do not use this medicine just before or after having heart bypass surgery (also called coronary artery bypass graft, or CABG).

Seek emergency medical help if you have symptoms of heart or circulation problems, such as chest pain, weakness, shortness of breath, slurred speech, or problems with vision or balance.

This medicine can also increase your risk of serious effects on the stomach or intestines, including bleeding or perforation (forming of a hole). These conditions can be fatal and gastrointestinal effects can occur without warning at any time while you are taking Relafen. Older adults may have an even greater risk of these serious gastrointestinal side effects.

Call your doctor at once if you have symptoms of bleeding in your stomach or intestines. This

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includes black, bloody, or tarry stools, or coughing up blood or vomit that looks like coffee grounds.

Do not use any other over-the-counter cold, allergy, or pain medication without first asking your doctor or pharmacist. Many medicines available over the counter contain aspirin or other medicines similar to Relafen (such as ibuprofen, ketoprofen, or naproxen). If you take certain products together you may accidentally take too much of this type of medication. Read the label of any other medicine you are using to see if it contains aspirin, ibuprofen, ketoprofen, or naproxen. Do not drink alcohol while taking Relafen. Alcohol can increase the risk of stomach bleeding caused by Relafen. Avoid exposure to sunlight or artificial UV rays (sunlamps or tanning beds). Relafen can make your skin more sensitive to sunlight and sunburn may result.

What should I discuss with my healthcare provider before taking Relafen?

Taking an NSAID can increase your risk of life-threatening heart or circulation problems, including heart attack or stroke. This risk will increase the longer you use an NSAID. Do not use this medicine just before or after having heart bypass surgery (also called coronary artery bypass graft, or CABG).

NSAIDs can also increase your risk of serious effects on the stomach or intestines, including bleeding or perforation (forming of a hole). These conditions can be fatal and gastrointestinal effects can occur without warning at any time while you are taking an NSAID. Older adults may have an even greater risk of these serious gastrointestinal side effects.

Do not use this medication if you are allergic to Relafen, or if you have a history of allergic reaction to aspirin or other NSAIDs.

Before taking Relafen, tell your doctor if you are allergic to any drugs, or if you have:

- a history of heart attack, stroke, or blood clot;
- heart disease, congestive heart failure, high blood pressure;
- a history of stomach ulcers or bleeding;
- liver or kidney disease,
- asthma;
- polyps in your nose;
- a bleeding or blood clotting disorder; or
- if you smoke.

If you have any of these conditions, you may need a dose adjustment or special tests to safely take Relafen.

FDA pregnancy category C. This medication may be harmful to an unborn baby. Tell your doctor if you are pregnant or plan to become pregnant during treatment. Taking Relafen during the last 3 months of pregnancy may harm the unborn baby. Do not take Relafen during pregnancy unless your doctor has told you to. It is not known whether Relafen passes into breast milk or if it could harm a nursing baby. Do not use this medication without telling your doctor if you are breast-feeding a baby. Do not give this medicine to a child without the advice of a doctor.

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How should I take Relafen?

Take Relafen exactly as it was prescribed for you. Do not take the medication in larger amounts, or take it for longer than recommended by your doctor. Follow the directions on your prescription label.

If you take Relafen for a long period of time, your doctor may want to check you on a regular basis to make sure this medication is not causing harmful effects. Do not miss any scheduled visits to your doctor.

Store Relafen at room temperature away from moisture and heat.

See also: [Relafen dosage](#) (in more detail)

What happens if I miss a dose?

Take the missed dose as soon as you remember. If it is almost time for your next dose, skip the missed dose and take the medicine at your next regularly scheduled time. Do not take extra medicine to make up the missed dose.

What happens if I overdose?

Seek emergency medical attention if you think you have used too much of this medicine. Symptoms of a Relafen overdose may include nausea, vomiting, stomach pain, drowsiness, black or bloody stools, coughing up blood, shallow breathing, fainting, or coma.

What should I avoid while taking Relafen?

Do not use any other over-the-counter cold, allergy, or pain medication without first asking your doctor or pharmacist. Many medicines available over the counter contain aspirin or other medicines similar to Relafen (such as ibuprofen, ketoprofen, or naproxen). If you take certain products together you may accidentally take too much of this type of medication. Read the label of any other medicine you are using to see if it contains aspirin, ibuprofen, ketoprofen, or naproxen. Do not drink alcohol while taking Relafen. Alcohol can increase the risk of stomach bleeding caused by Relafen. Avoid prolonged exposure to sunlight. Relafen may increase the sensitivity of the skin to sunlight. Use a sunscreen and wear protective clothing when exposure to the sun is unavoidable.

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What are the possible side effects of Relafen?

Get emergency medical help if you have any of these signs of an allergic reaction: hives; difficulty breathing; swelling of your face, lips, tongue, or throat. Stop taking Relafen and seek medical attention or call your doctor at once if you have any of these serious side effects:

- chest pain, weakness, shortness of breath, slurred speech, problems with vision or balance;
- black, bloody, or tarry stools;
- coughing up blood or vomit that looks like coffee grounds;
- swelling or rapid weight gain;
- urinating less than usual or not at all;

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- nausea, stomach pain, low fever, loss of appetite, dark urine, clay-colored stools, jaundice (yellowing of the skin or eyes);
- fever, sore throat, and headache with a severe blistering, peeling, and red skin rash; or
- bruising, severe tingling, numbness, pain, muscle weakness.

Less serious Relafen side effects may include:

- upset stomach, mild heartburn or stomach pain, diarrhea, constipation;
- bloating, gas;
- dizziness, headache, nervousness;
- skin itching or rash;
- blurred vision; or
- ringing in your ears.

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: [Relafen side effects](#) (in more detail)

What other drugs will affect Relafen?

Tell your doctor if you are taking an antidepressant such as citalopram (Celexa), duloxetine (Cymbalta), escitalopram (Lexapro), fluoxetine (Prozac, Sarafem, Symbyax), fluvoxamine (Luvox), paroxetine (Paxil), sertraline (Zoloft), or venlafaxine (Effexor). Taking any of these drugs with Relafen may cause you to bruise or bleed easily.

Before taking Relafen, tell your doctor if you are taking any of the following drugs:

- a blood thinner such as warfarin (Coumadin);
- lithium (Eskalith, Lithobid);
- methotrexate (Rheumatrex, Trexall);
- diuretics (water pills) such as furosemide (Lasix);
- steroids (prednisone and others);
- aspirin or other NSAIDs (non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs) such as etodolac (Lodine), flurbiprofen (Ansaid), indomethacin (Indocin), ketoprofen (Orudis), ketorolac (Toradol), mefenamic acid (Ponstel), meloxicam (Mobic), naproxen (Aleve, Naprosyn), piroxicam (Feldene), and others; or
- an ACE inhibitor such as benazepril (Lotensin), captopril (Capoten), fosinopril (Monopril), enalapril (Vasotec), lisinopril (Prinivil, Zestril), ramipril (Altace), and others.

This list is not complete and there may be other drugs that can interact with Relafen. Tell your doctor about all the prescription and over-the-counter medications you use. This includes vitamins, minerals, herbal products, and drugs prescribed by other doctors. Do not start using a new medication without telling your doctor.

More Relafen resources

- [Relafen Side Effects](#) (in more detail)
- [Relafen Dosage](#)
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Where can I get more information?

- Your pharmacist can provide more information about Relafen.

What does my medication look like?

Nabumetone is available with a prescription under the brand name Relafen. Other brand or generic formulations may also be available. Ask your pharmacist any questions you have about this medication, especially if it is new to you.

- Relafen 500 mg oval, white, film-coated tablets
- Relafen 750 mg oval, beige, film-coated tablets

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