



# Voltaren

**Generic Name:** diclofenac sodium **Brand Name:** *Voltaren, Voltaren-XR*

## What is Voltaren?

Voltaren (diclofenac) is a nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID). Diclofenac works by reducing substances in the body that cause pain and inflammation.

Voltaren is used to treat mild to moderate pain, or signs and symptoms of **osteoarthritis** or **rheumatoid arthritis**.

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

## Important information

You should not use Voltaren if you have a history of allergic reaction to aspirin or NSAIDs (non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs).

Voltaren may also cause stomach or intestinal bleeding, which can be fatal. These conditions can occur without warning while you are using Voltaren, especially in older adults.

## Before taking this medicine

Voltaren can increase your risk of fatal heart attack or stroke, especially if you use it long term or take high doses, or if you have heart disease. Even people without heart disease or risk factors could have a stroke or heart attack while taking this medicine.

Do not use Voltaren just before or after heart bypass surgery (coronary artery bypass graft, or CABG).

You should not use Voltaren if you are allergic to diclofenac, or if you have ever had an asthma attack or severe allergic reaction after taking aspirin or an NSAID.

To make sure Voltaren is safe for you, tell your doctor if you have:

- heart disease, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes, or if you smoke;
- a history of heart attack, stroke, or blood clot;
- a history of stomach ulcers or bleeding;
- asthma;
- liver or kidney disease;
- fluid retention.

**Taking Voltaren during the last 3 months of pregnancy may harm the unborn baby.** Tell your doctor if you are pregnant or plan to become pregnant.

It is not known whether diclofenac passes into breast milk or if it could harm a nursing baby. You should not breast-feed while using this medicine.

Voltaren is not approved for use by anyone younger than 18 years old.

## How should I take diclofenac?

Take Voltaren exactly as prescribed by your doctor. Follow your doctor's instructions about how much medicine to take.

Follow all directions on your prescription label. Your doctor may occasionally change your dose. Do not take Voltaren in larger amounts or for longer than recommended. Use the lowest dose that is effective in treating your condition.

Do not crush, chew, or break a Voltaren XR extended-release tablet. Swallow the tablet whole.

If you use Voltaren long-term, you may need frequent medical tests.

Store at room temperature away from moisture and heat. Keep the bottle tightly closed when not in use.

Read all patient information, medication guides, and instruction sheets provided to you. Ask your doctor or pharmacist if you have any questions.

**See also: Dosage Information (in more detail)**

## 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.

## What should I avoid while taking Voltaren?

Avoid drinking alcohol. It may increase your risk of stomach bleeding.

Avoid taking aspirin or other NSAIDs while you are taking Voltaren.

Ask a doctor or pharmacist before using any cold, allergy, or pain medication. Many medicines available over the counter contain aspirin or other medicines similar to diclofenac. Taking certain products together can cause you to get too much of this type of medication. Check the label to see if a medicine contains aspirin, ibuprofen, ketoprofen, or naproxen.

## Voltaren side effects

Get emergency medical help if you have **signs of an allergic reaction to Voltaren**: sneezing, runny or stuffy nose; wheezing or trouble breathing; hives; swelling of your face, lips, tongue, or throat.

Get emergency medical help if you have **signs of a heart attack or stroke**: chest pain spreading to your jaw or shoulder, sudden numbness or weakness on one side of the body, slurred speech, feeling short of breath.

Stop using Voltaren and call your doctor at once if you have:

- the first sign of any skin rash, no matter how mild;
- shortness of breath (even with mild exertion);
- swelling or rapid weight gain;
- signs of stomach bleeding - bloody or tarry stools, coughing up blood or vomit that looks like coffee grounds;
- liver problems - nausea, upper stomach pain, itching, tired feeling, flu-like symptoms, loss of appetite, dark urine, clay-colored stools, jaundice (yellowing of the skin or eyes);
- kidney problems - little or no urinating, painful or difficult urination, swelling in your feet or ankles, feeling tired or short of breath;
- high blood pressure - severe headache, pounding in your neck or ears, nosebleed, anxiety, confusion;
- low red blood cells (anemia) - pale skin, feeling light-headed or short of breath, rapid heart rate, trouble concentrating; or
- severe skin reaction - fever, sore throat, swelling in your face or tongue, burning in your eyes, skin pain followed by a red or purple skin rash that spreads (especially in the face or upper body) and causes blistering and peeling.

Common Voltaren side effects may include:

- indigestion, gas, stomach pain, nausea, vomiting;
- diarrhea, constipation;
- headache, dizziness, drowsiness;
- stuffy nose;
- itching, increased sweating;
- increased blood pressure; or
- swelling or pain in your arms or legs.

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: Side effects (in more detail)**

## What other drugs will affect Voltaren?

**Ask your doctor before using Voltaren if you take an antidepressant** such as citalopram, escitalopram, fluoxetine (Prozac), fluvoxamine, paroxetine, sertraline (Zoloft), trazodone, or vilazodone. Taking any of these medicines with an NSAID may cause you to bruise or bleed easily.

Tell your doctor about all your current medicines and any you start or stop using, especially:

- cyclosporine;
- lithium;
- methotrexate;
- rifampin;
- antifungal medicine;
- a blood thinner (warfarin, Coumadin, Jantoven);
- heart or blood pressure medication, including a diuretic or "water pill";
- other forms of diclofenac (Flector, Pennsaid, Solaraze, Voltaren Gel);
- other NSAIDs - aspirin, ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin), naproxen (Aleve), celecoxib (Celebrex), indomethacin, meloxicam, and others; or
- steroid medicine (prednisone and others).

This list is not complete. Other drugs may interact with diclofenac, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal products. Not all possible interactions are listed in this medication guide.

## Where can I get more information?

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