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Dilaudid

Generic Name: hydromorphone (oral) (HYE droe MOR fone)
Brand Names: *Dilaudid*, *Dilaudid-5*, *Exalgo*

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What is Dilaudid?

Dilaudid (hydromorphone) belongs to a group of drugs called narcotic [pain relievers](#), also called opioids. It is similar to morphine.

Dilaudid is prescribed for the relief of moderate to severe pain. It works by binding to certain receptors in the brain and nervous system to reduce pain.

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

Important information about Dilaudid

Dilaudid may be habit-forming and should be used only by the person it was prescribed for. Never share Dilaudid with another person, especially someone with a history of drug abuse or addiction. Keep the medication in a place where others cannot get to it. Do not drink alcohol. Dangerous side effects or death can occur when alcohol is combined with a narcotic pain medicine. Check your [food](#) and medicine labels to be sure these products do not contain alcohol.

Never take Dilaudid in larger amounts, or for longer than recommended by your doctor. Follow the directions on your prescription label. Tell your doctor if the medicine seems to stop working as well in relieving your pain.

Dilaudid may impair your thinking or reactions. Be careful if you drive or do anything that requires

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Related Dilaudid Information

**Approval History**
FDA approved 1992

**Pregnancy Category**
Risk cannot be ruled out

**Availability**
Prescription only

**CSA Schedule**
High potential for abuse

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you to be alert. Do not stop using Dilaudid suddenly, or you could have unpleasant withdrawal symptoms. Ask your doctor how to avoid withdrawal symptoms when you stop using Dilaudid.

Before using Dilaudid

Do not use Dilaudid if you have ever had an allergic reaction to a narcotic medicine (examples include codeine, methadone, morphine, Oxycontin, Darvocet, Percocet, Vicodin, Lortab, and many others). You should also not take Dilaudid if you are having an asthma attack or if you have a bowel obstruction called paralytic ileus. Hydromorphone may be habit-forming and should be used only by the person it was prescribed for. Never share Dilaudid with another person, especially someone with a history of drug abuse or addiction. Keep the medication in a place where others cannot get to it.

If you have any of these other conditions, you may need a Dilaudid dose adjustment or special tests:

- asthma, COPD, sleep apnea, or other breathing disorders;
- liver or kidney disease;
- underactive thyroid;
- curvature of the spine;
- a history of head injury or brain tumor;
- epilepsy or other seizure disorder;
- low blood pressure;
- gallbladder disease;
- Addison's disease or other adrenal gland disorders;
- enlarged prostate, [urination](#) problems;
- mental illness; or
- a history of drug or alcohol addiction.

FDA pregnancy category C. It is not known whether Dilaudid will harm an unborn baby. Dilaudid may cause addiction or withdrawal symptoms in a newborn if the mother takes the medication during pregnancy. Tell your doctor if you are pregnant or plan to [become pregnant](#) while using Dilaudid. Hydromorphone can pass into breast milk and may harm a nursing baby. Do not use this medication without telling your doctor if you are breast-feeding a baby.

See also: [Dilaudid pregnancy and breastfeeding warnings](#) (in more detail)

You should not use an extended-release form of hydromorphone (such as Palladone) unless you are already being treated with a similar opioid pain medicine and your body is tolerant to it. Talk with your doctor if you are not sure you are opioid-tolerant.

Older adults may be more sensitive to the effects of Dilaudid.

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Take Dilaudid exactly as prescribed. Never take Dilaudid in larger amounts, or for longer than recommended by your doctor. Follow the directions on your prescription label. Tell your doctor if the medicine seems to stop working as well in relieving your pain.

Take the pill form of this medicine with a full glass of water.

Measure liquid medicine with a special dose-measuring spoon or medicine cup, not with a regular table spoon. If you do not have a dose-measuring device, ask your pharmacist for one. Avoid getting Dilaudid liquid on your skin. It can be absorbed through your skin, and you may get too large a dose.

Do not stop using Dilaudid suddenly, or you could have unpleasant withdrawal symptoms. Ask your doctor how to avoid withdrawal symptoms when you stop using this medicine.

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

Keep track of the amount of medicine used from each new bottle. Dilaudid is a drug of abuse and you should be aware if anyone is using your medicine improperly or without a prescription.

After you have stopped using this medication, flush any unused pills down the toilet.

Throw away any unused liquid Dilaudid that is older than 90 days.

What happens if I miss a dose?

Since Dilaudid is taken as needed, you may not be on a dosing schedule. If you are taking the medication regularly, 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. An overdose of hydromorphone can be fatal.

Overdose symptoms may include extreme drowsiness, pinpoint pupils, confusion, cold and clammy skin, weak pulse, shallow breathing, fainting, or breathing that stops.

What should I avoid while using Dilaudid?

Do not drink alcohol. Dangerous side effects or death can occur when alcohol is combined with a narcotic pain medicine. Check your food and medicine labels to be sure these products do not contain alcohol. Dilaudid may impair your thinking or reactions. Be careful if you drive or do anything that requires you to be alert.

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Dilaudid side effects

Get emergency medical help if you have any of these signs of an allergic reaction to Dilaudid:

experience cognitive problems such as confusion, disorientation and forgetfulness, a new study ...

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Help and Support

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hives; difficulty breathing; swelling of your face, lips, tongue, or throat. Call your doctor at once if you have any of these serious side effects:

- shallow breathing, slow heartbeat;
- seizure (convulsions);
- cold, clammy skin;
- confusion;
- severe weakness or dizziness; or
- feeling light-headed, fainting.

Less serious Dilaudid side effects are more likely to occur, such as:

- nausea, vomiting, constipation, loss of appetite;
- warmth, tingling, or redness under your skin;
- dizziness, headache;
- dry [mouth](#);
- sweating; or
- itching.

This is not a complete list of Dilaudid side effects and others may occur. Tell your doctor about any unusual or bothersome side effect. You may report side effects to FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.

See also: [Dilaudid side effects](#) (in more detail)

What other drugs will affect Dilaudid?

Do not take Dilaudid with other narcotic pain medications, sedatives, tranquilizers, muscle relaxers, or other medicines that can make you sleepy or slow your breathing. Dangerous side effects may result.

Before taking Dilaudid, tell your doctor if you are using pentazocine (Talwin), nalbuphine (Nubain), butorphanol (Stadol), or buprenorphine (Buprenex, Subutex). If you are using any of these drugs, you may not be able to use Dilaudid, or you may need dosage adjustments or special tests during treatment.

This list is not complete and other drugs may interact with Dilaudid. 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.

More Dilaudid resources

- [Dilaudid Side Effects](#) (in more detail)
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Med Facts	Dilaudid MedFacts Consumer Leaflet (Wolters Kluwer)
Advanced	Dilaudid Advanced Consumer (Micromedex) - Includes Dosage Information
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Professional	Hydromorphone Prescribing Information (FDA)
Professional	Dilaudid-HP Prescribing Information (FDA)
Advanced	Dilaudid-HP Advanced Consumer (Micromedex) - Includes Dosage Information
Med Facts	Dilaudid-HP MedFacts Consumer Leaflet (Wolters Kluwer)
Professional	Exalgo Prescribing Information (FDA)
Med Facts	Exalgo MedFacts Consumer Leaflet (Wolters Kluwer)
Professional	Hydromorphone Hydrochloride Monograph (AHFS DI)
Professional	Palladone Prescribing Information (FDA)

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Where can I get more information?

- Your pharmacist can provide more information about Dilaudid.

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