

# Palmetto State Pharmaceuticals

## *Patient Drug Education*

### **ERYTHROMYCIN 333MG TAB EC**

#### **USES:**

This medication is used to treat or prevent a wide variety of bacterial infections. Erythromycin is known as a macrolide antibiotic. It works by stopping the growth of bacteria. This antibiotic treats or prevents only bacterial infections. It will not work for viral infections (e.g., common cold, flu). Unnecessary use or overuse of any antibiotic can lead to its decreased effectiveness.

#### **HOW TO TAKE THIS MEDICATION:**

**HOW TO USE:** This medication is best absorbed when taken by mouth on an empty stomach. However, nausea commonly occurs with the use of erythromycin, especially when taken on an empty stomach. To reduce this side effect, you may take it with food or milk. Swallow the medication whole. Do not crush, chew, or break it. The dosage and length of treatment is based on your medical condition and response to therapy. In children, the dosage is also based on age and weight. Antibiotics work best when the amount of medicine in your body is kept at a constant level. Therefore, take this drug at evenly spaced intervals. If you are using this medication to treat an infection, continue to take this medication until the full prescribed amount is finished, even if symptoms disappear after a few days. Stopping the medication too early may allow bacteria to continue to grow, which may result in a relapse of the infection. Inform your doctor if your condition persists or worsens. If you are taking this medication to prevent certain bacterial infections, take it exactly as directed by your doctor. Do not stop taking the medication without your doctor's approval.

#### **SIDE EFFECTS:**

Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, stomach pain/cramping, loss of appetite, and mild heartburn may occur. Taking this medication with food may lessen these symptoms. If any of these effects persist or worsen, notify your doctor or pharmacist promptly. Remember that your doctor has prescribed this medication because the benefit to you is greater than the risk of side effects. Many people using this medication do not have serious side effects. Tell your doctor immediately if any of these unlikely but serious side effects occur: mouth sores. Tell your doctor immediately if any of these rare but very serious side effects occur: fainting, fast/irregular heartbeat, persistent nausea/vomiting, severe stomach/abdominal pain, unusual fatigue, dark urine, yellowing eyes or skin, seizures, hearing problems (e.g., hearing loss). This medication may rarely cause a severe intestinal condition (pseudomembranous colitis) due to resistant bacteria. This condition may occur weeks after treatment has stopped. Do not use anti-diarrhea products or narcotic pain medications if you have the following symptoms because these products may make them worse. Tell your doctor immediately if you develop: persistent diarrhea, abdominal or stomach pain/cramping, blood/mucus in your stool. Use of this medication for prolonged or repeated periods may result in oral thrush or a new vaginal yeast infection (oral or vaginal fungal infection). Contact your doctor if you notice white patches in your mouth, a change in vaginal discharge or other new symptoms. A very serious allergic reaction to this drug is unlikely, but seek immediate medical attention if it occurs. Symptoms of a serious allergic reaction may include: rash, itching, swelling, severe dizziness, trouble breathing. If you notice other effects not listed above, contact your doctor or pharmacist.

#### **PRECAUTIONS:**

Before taking erythromycin, tell your doctor or pharmacist if you are allergic to it; or to other macrolide antibiotics (e.g., azithromycin, clarithromycin); or if you have any other allergies. Before using this medication, tell your doctor or pharmacist your medical history, especially of: liver disease, kidney disease, certain type of muscle disease (myasthenia gravis), personal or family history of a certain heart problem (QTc prolongation). Caution is advised when using this drug in the elderly because they may be more sensitive to its side effects, especially hearing loss and irregular heartbeat. This medication should be used only when clearly needed during pregnancy. Discuss the risks and benefits with your doctor. This medication passes into breast milk. While there have been no reports of harm to nursing infants, consult your doctor before breast-feeding.

#### **DRUG INTERACTIONS:**

Your doctor or pharmacist may already be aware of any possible drug interactions and may be monitoring you for it. Do not start, stop or change the dosage of any medicine before checking with them first. This drug should not be used with the following medications because very serious interactions may occur: eletriptan, ergot alkaloids (e.g., ergotamine, dihydroergotamine), drugs which may affect the heart rhythm (QTc prolonging drugs such as cisapride, pimozide). If you are currently using any of these medications listed above, tell your doctor or pharmacist before starting erythromycin. Other drugs besides erythromycin and those listed above which may affect the heart rhythm (QTc prolongation in the EKG) include amiodarone, dofetilide, procainamide, quinidine, sotalol, moxifloxacin, gatifloxacin, propafenone and thioridazine, among others. QTc prolongation can infrequently result in serious, rarely fatal, irregular heartbeats. Consult your doctor or pharmacist for more details, and for instructions on how you may minimize the risk of this effect. Before using this medication, tell your doctor or pharmacist of all prescription and nonprescription/herbal products you may use, especially of: colchicine, digoxin, live bacterial vaccines, warfarin, drugs affecting liver enzymes that remove erythromycin from your body (such as azole antifungals-including itraconazole and fluconazole, rifamycins-including rifabutin, quinupristin-dalfopristin, calcium channel blockers-including diltiazem and verapamil, certain anti-seizure medicines-including carbamazepine and phenytoin and valproate). This drug can slow down the removal of other drugs from your body by affecting certain liver enzymes. Some examples of these affected drugs include alfentanil, bromocriptine, buspirone, certain benzodiazepines (alprazolam, midazolam, triazolam), caffeine-containing drugs, cilostazol, corticosteroids (e.g., prednisone), cyclosporine, eplerenone, certain erectile dysfunction medications (sildenafil, vardenafil), eszopiclone, felodipine, certain "statin" drugs (atorvastatin, lovastatin, simvastatin), quetiapine, tacrolimus, theophylline, tolterodine, vinblastine. This medication may decrease the effectiveness of combination-type birth control pills. This can result in pregnancy. You may need to use an additional form of reliable birth control while using this medication. Consult your doctor or pharmacist for

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details. This drug can affect the results of certain lab tests. Make sure laboratory personnel and your doctors know you are taking this medication.

## **NOTES:**

Do not share this medication with others. This medication has been prescribed for your current condition only. Do not use it later for another infection unless told to do so by your doctor. A different medication may be necessary in those cases.

## **MISSED DOSE:**

If you miss a dose, take it as soon as you remember. If it is near the time of the next dose, skip the missed dose and resume your usual dosing schedule. Do not double the dose to catch up.

## **STORAGE:**

Store at controlled room temperature below 86 degrees F (30 degrees C) away from light and moisture. Do not store in the bathroom. Keep all medicines away from children and pets.