

Palmetto State Pharmaceuticals

Patient Drug Education

PENICILLIN VK 500 MG TABLET

USES:

Penicillin is an antibiotic used to treat and prevent a wide variety of bacterial infections. It works by stopping the growth of bacteria. This antibiotic treats and 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: Take this medication by mouth as directed by your doctor. This medication may be taken with or without food. However, penicillin is best absorbed when taken on an empty stomach (1 hour before or 2 hours after meals). The dosage is based on your medical condition and response to therapy. 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. 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.

SIDE EFFECTS:

Upset stomach, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, and mouth sores may occur. If any of these effects persist or worsen, notify your doctor or pharmacist promptly. Although uncommon, you may develop a black, "hairy" tongue while taking this medication. This effect is harmless and usually goes away after treatment. Maintain good oral hygiene, and brush your tongue with a soft toothbrush twice a day. Consult your doctor or pharmacist for more information. 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: unusual tiredness, joint/muscle pain. Tell your doctor immediately if any of these rare but very serious side effects occur: easy bruising/bleeding. This medication may rarely cause a severe intestinal condition (pseudomembranous colitis) due to a resistant bacteria. This condition may occur during treatment or 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, new fever, severe dizziness, trouble breathing. If you notice other effects not listed above, contact your doctor or pharmacist.

PRECAUTIONS:

Before taking penicillin, tell your doctor or pharmacist if you are allergic to it; or to other antibiotics including penicillin-type medications (e.g., amoxicillin, ampicillin) or cephalosporins (e.g., cephalexin, cefuroxime); or if you have any other allergies. Before using this medication, tell your doctor or pharmacist your medical history, especially of: kidney problems. Kidney function declines as you grow older. This medication is removed by the kidneys. Therefore, elderly people may be more sensitive to this drug. This medication should be used only when clearly needed during pregnancy. Discuss the risks and benefits with your doctor. This drug passes into breast milk. Consult your doctor before breast-feeding.

DRUG INTERACTIONS:

Your healthcare professionals (e.g., 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. Before using this medication, tell your doctor or pharmacist of all prescription and nonprescription/herbal products you may use, especially of: live bacterial vaccines, methotrexate, tetracyclines, khat, guar gum. Before taking penicillin, tell your doctor or pharmacist if you are also taking probenecid. Probenecid slows down the removal of penicillin from your body, resulting in higher levels of this antibiotic in your bloodstream. For certain types of difficult-to-treat infections, your doctor may prescribe these 2 medications together in order to achieve this effect. Consult your doctor or pharmacist for more details. 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 details. Penicillin may cause false positive results with certain diabetic urine testing products (cupric sulfate-type). This drug may also affect the results of certain lab tests. Make sure laboratory personnel and your doctors know you use this drug.

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. With prolonged treatment, laboratory and/or medical tests (e.g., kidney function, complete blood counts) should be performed periodically to monitor your progress or check for side effects. Consult your doctor for more details.

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.

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Do not double the dose to catch up.

STORAGE:

Store at room temperature between 59-86 degrees F (15-30 degrees C) away from light and moisture. Do not store in the bathroom. Keep all medicines away from children and pets.