

# Levocetirizine for allergy (Xyzal)

Levocetirizine relieves allergic symptoms.

Take one dose a day.

Levocetirizine is called a non-drowsy antihistamine; however, it can still cause drowsiness in a few people. Make sure your reactions are normal before you drive and before you use tools or machines.

## About levocetirizine

Type of medicine	An antihistamine (non-drowsy)
Used for	Allergies such as hay fever and some allergic skin reactions
Also called	Xyzal®
Available as	Tablets and oral liquid medicine

Levocetirizine is an anti-allergy medicine. It stops the effects of a substance called histamine and this helps to relieve the symptoms of allergies such as hay fever and urticaria.

Exposure to substances such as pollen, pet fur, house dust or insect bites can cause your body to produce [allergic symptoms](#). Cells in the lining of your nose and eyes release histamine when they come into contact with these substances. This leads to inflammation in your nose and eyes, which produces symptoms such as sneezing and watery eyes.

**Urticaria** is a condition where an itchy skin rash develops. The rash can be triggered by an allergy to a substance such as a soap or a detergent.

## Before taking levocetirizine

Some medicines are not suitable for people with certain conditions, and sometimes a medicine can only be used if extra care is taken. For these reasons, before you start taking levocetirizine it is important that your doctor knows:

- If you are pregnant or breastfeeding.
- If you have any problems with the way your kidneys work.
- If you have epilepsy.
- If you have a rare inherited blood disorder called porphyria.
- If you are taking or using any other medicines. This includes any medicines you are taking which are available to buy without a prescription, as well as herbal and complementary medicines.
- If you have ever had an allergic reaction to another antihistamine, or to any other medicine.

## How to take levocetirizine

- Before you start the treatment, read the manufacturer's printed information leaflet from inside the pack. It will give you more information about levocetirizine, and will also provide you with a full list of side-effects which you could experience from taking it.
- The usual dose for adults and older children is one (5 mg) tablet daily. If it is for a younger child (aged 2–6 years), they are likely to be prescribed liquid medicine, so check the label on the bottle carefully to make sure you give the correct dose for the age of your child.
- Most people take levocetirizine in the morning, but you can take it at whatever time of day you find easiest to remember. Try to take your doses at the same time of day, each day, as this will help you to remember to take them regularly. You can take levocetirizine either before or after a meal. The tablets are best swallowed with a drink of water.

- If you have been given the liquid medicine, an oral dose syringe will be included in the pack. This is to measure out the dose. Put the tip of the syringe into the medicine and draw the plunger up to the mark which corresponds to the dose prescribed. Remove the syringe from the bottle and empty its contents on to a spoon or into a small glassful of water. The medicine can be swallowed either undiluted, or diluted with water. Remember to rinse the syringe with water after using it.
- If you forget to take a dose at your usual time, take it as soon as you remember. If you do not remember until the following day then leave out the forgotten dose from the previous day and take the dose that is due that day. Do not take two doses at the same time to make up for a missed dose.

## Getting the most from your treatment

- Many people only need to take an antihistamine when they have symptoms. Unless you are told otherwise, you should stop taking levocetirizine once your symptoms have eased.
- Although levocetirizine is classed as a non-drowsy antihistamine, it can still cause drowsiness in a few people. If this happens to you, do not drive and do not use tools or machines.
- If you drink alcohol while you are on levocetirizine, be aware of its effects on you and do not drink more than moderate amounts. Alcohol can increase the risk of side-effects from antihistamines.
- If you are having an operation, or any treatment or tests (particularly if it is to test for an allergy), make sure you say that you are taking an antihistamine.
- If you buy any medicines 'over the counter', check with a pharmacist that they are suitable to take with an antihistamine. This is because a number of other medicines can increase the risk of side-effects.

## Can levocetirizine cause problems?

Along with their useful effects, most medicines can cause unwanted side-effects although not everyone experiences them. The table below contains the most common ones associated with levocetirizine. You will find a full list in the manufacturer's information leaflet supplied with your medicine. The unwanted effects often improve as your body adjusts to the new medicine, but speak with your doctor or pharmacist if any continue or become troublesome.

<b>Common levocetirizine side-effects (these affect fewer than 1 in 10 people)</b>	<b>What can I do if I experience this?</b>
Feeling tired, dizzy or sleepy	If this happens, do not drive and do not use tools or machines
Dry mouth	Try chewing sugar-free gum or sucking sugar-free sweets
Headache	Drink plenty of water and ask your pharmacist to recommend a suitable painkiller. If the headaches continue, let your doctor know
Feeling sick (nausea), tummy ache (abdominal pain)	Stick to simple meals - avoid rich or spicy foods

If you experience any other symptoms which you think may be due to the medicine, speak with your doctor or pharmacist for further advice.

## How to store levocetirizine

- Keep all medicines out of the reach and sight of children.
- Store in a cool, dry place, away from direct heat and light.
- The liquid medicine only keeps for three months once the bottle has been opened. Do not store it or use it for longer than this.

# Important information about all medicines

Never take more than the prescribed dose. If you suspect that you or someone else might have taken an overdose of this medicine, go to the accident and emergency department of your local hospital. Take the container with you, even if it is empty.

This medicine is for you. Never give it to other people even if their condition appears to be the same as yours.

Do not keep out-of-date or unwanted medicines. Take them to your local pharmacy which will dispose of them for you.

If you have any questions about this medicine ask your pharmacist.

If you experience side effects, you can report them online through the [Yellow Card website](#).

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## Further reading

- [Manufacturer's PIL, Xyzal® 5 mg tablets](#); UCB Pharma Limited, The electronic Medicines Compendium. Dated April 2021.
- [Manufacturer's PIL, Xyzal® 0.5 mg/ml Oral Solution](#); UCB Pharma Limited, The electronic Medicines Compendium. Dated April 2021.
- [Medicines Complete BNF 88th Edition](#); British Medical Association and Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain, London.

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