



## Azithromycin

### What is it?

This is an antibiotic used to treat mild to moderate bacterial infections.

### How to take this medication:

This medication can be taken with water and/or with or without food. To reduce the chance of stomach upset, take with food.

### Do NOT take this medication if you:

- Are allergic to azithromycin
- Have had a previous reaction to azithromycin
- Have allergies to other antibiotics such as erythromycin, or any macrolide or ketolide antibacterial agents

### Tell your health care provider if you:

- Have any liver or kidney problems
- Have a weak immune system
- Have stomach problems
- Are pregnant or breastfeeding
- Have constantly low levels of potassium or magnesium
- Have myasthenia gravis (chronic autoimmune neuromuscular disease)
- Have a galactose intolerance, Lapp lactase deficiency or glucose-galactose malabsorption
- Have a history of heart problems such as bradycardia (slow heart rate), cardiac arrhythmia (irregular heart beat) or cardiac insufficiency (the heart has a hard time pumping blood to your body)
- Have a known prolonged heart cycle (QT prolongation)
- Are currently taking medication known to prolong QT interval (prolong the heart cycle):
  - \* antiarrhythmics (drugs to regulate the heart beat)
  - \* antipsychotic agents
  - \* antidepressants
  - \* fluoroquinolones (a class of antibiotics)

**NOTE:** Some of these conditions may put you at an increased risk of having irregular heartbeats when you take this medicine

### Side effects:

Side effects are usually mild to moderate and go away after the medicine is stopped. The most common side effects are:

- Headache
- Diarrhea/loose stools
- Stomach pain
- Nausea and vomiting (note: if vomiting occurs less than one hour after taking this medication, you may need to be re-treated. Contact your health care provider if vomiting occurs.)

If you have any symptoms or side effects that are not listed here or become bad enough to interfere with your daily activities, talk to your health care provider.

If you develop diarrhea that becomes severe and watery or does not go away, call your health care provider. This could be a sign of a serious medical problem. Do not take over-the-counter medications to treat diarrhea without first talking with your health care provider.

Allergic reactions to azithromycin are rare, but these reactions can be very serious if not treated right away. If you experience any of the following symptoms, seek medical attention right away:

- Trouble breathing
- Swelling in the face, mouth and neck
- Severe skin rash, hives or blisters

## Drug interactions:

Avoid taking antacids (e.g., Tums, Roloids, Gaviscon, Maalox, etc.) with this medication as it can affect absorption. Wait at least 2 hours after taking this medication before taking any antacids.

Tell your health care provider of all the over-the-counter and prescription medications you are taking, including:

- Antacids
- Blood thinners
- Cyclosporin (used to suppress immune system)
- Digoxin (used for treatment of heart problems)
- Nelfinavir (used for treatment of HIV infections)
- Ergotamine or ergot derivatives (used for migraine treatment)

## Storage:

Store tablets at room temperature. Do not allow medication to freeze. Keep out of reach and sight of children.

## Points to remember:

This medication has been prescribed for your current condition only. Be sure to finish taking all of your medication exactly as prescribed. If you stop taking azithromycin too soon, your infection could come back. The next infection may be worse and be more difficult to treat.

If you are in a sexual relationship, your partner will also need treatment for this infection. If your partner is not treated, they can re-infect you with the same bacteria. Talk to your health care provider about treatment for your sexual partner(s).



For more information, please call **1-800-660-5853**  
or visit our website at **[www.healthunit.org](http://www.healthunit.org)**