



# Levofloxacin Fact Sheet

## What is levofloxacin?

Levofloxacin belongs to a class of drugs called quinolone antibiotics. It has been approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to treat and protect people who have been exposed to anthrax spores. Levofloxacin is usually provided in a 750-mg oral tablet or as an oral suspension for children.

## How to take levofloxacin?

**ADULTS:** Take 1 tablet every 24 hours as directed. It is important to take this medicine at the same time every day.

**CHILDREN:** A child's dose depends on body weight. Give the medication to your child as directed on additional dosing documentation.

It is best to take levofloxacin 2 hours before or after a meal with at least one large glass of water. However, if an upset stomach occurs, levofloxacin may be taken with food. Avoid dairy products such as milk and yogurt for at least 2 hours before and after taking the medicine. If you take vitamins or antacids such as Tums or Maalox, take them 2 hours before or 2 hours after taking levofloxacin.

## Levofloxacin dosing in Anthrax Attack:

Initial 10 day course will be provided to all individuals who may have been exposed to anthrax. An additional

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50 day course of levofloxacin will be provided to individuals that have been identified as directly exposed to anthrax attack.

### **What to do if you miss a dose?**

If you miss a dose, take it as soon as possible and continue taking it every 24 hours. If it is almost time for your next dose, skip the missed dose and go back to your regular schedule. Do not take 2 pills to make up for the missed dose. Finish all your pills, even if you feel okay, unless your doctor tells you to stop. If you stop taking the medicine too soon, you may become ill.

### **Side effects**

Common side effects of levofloxacin include an upset stomach, vomiting, diarrhea, fatigue, dizziness or headache. If you have problems with any of these symptoms, tell your doctor. Less common side effects include yellowing of the skin and eyes, tremors, restlessness, tingling in the arms and legs, insomnia, seizures, vein or colon inflammation, crystals in urine, tendonitis, tendon rupture, or mental changes. If any of these symptoms occur, call your doctor right away.

**Severe allergic reactions are very rare.** Signs of an allergic reaction include, rash, itching, swelling of the tongue, hands or feet, fever, or trouble breathing. If any of these symptoms occur, call your doctor right away.

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**Special note for children:** This medicine may cause joint problems in infants and children under 18 years of age. If your child has any joint pain while he/she is taking levofloxacin, tell your doctor.

## Precautions

- Be sure to tell the doctor if you are allergic to any medicine
- It is very important to tell your doctor about ALL of the medicine you are currently taking even pills that were bought at the store such as vitamins and antacids.
- Tell the doctor if you have ever had a seizure, stroke, or problems with your kidneys, joints or tendons, liver, or vision. Report any history of unusual bleeding or bruising.
- If this drug makes you dizzy, use caution driving or doing tasks that require you to be alert. Avoid alcohol in this case as it will make the dizziness worse.
- Levofloxacin can make skin very sensitive to the sun which increases the chance of getting severe sunburn. Avoid sun as much as possible. When outside, wear long sleeve shirt and hat and always apply sunscreen (30 SPF).

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- In women, levofloxacin can cause vaginal itching and discharge known as a yeast infection. Tell your doctor if this occurs.
- If you are pregnant or breast feeding tell your doctor, as safety of levofloxacin during pregnancy is unknown. If you are pregnant or become pregnant, tell your doctor.
- Levofloxacin can increase the effects of caffeine and theophylline (a medicine).
- Levofloxacin can disturb blood glucose levels in persons taking antidiabetic medications or insulin, giving either a lower or higher reading than normal. Monitor blood glucose levels closely.

*For further information, contact the  
Oklahoma City-County Health Department  
(405) 425-4437*

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