PATIENT INFORMATION LEAFLET

RETCIN
(Erythromycin)

PLEASE READ THIS LEAFLET CAREFULLY BEFORE YOU START TAKING THIS MEDICINE
KEEP THIS LEAFLET UNTIL YOU HAVE FINISHED ALL THE PRESCRIBED COURSE OF RETCIN.
IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS CONCERNING YOUR MEDICINE ASK YOUR DOCTOR OR PHARMACIST FOR MORE INFORMATION.

What is in your medicine?

The name of this medicine is RETCIN. It contains the active ingredient Erythromycin Ph.Eur. 274 mg.

Each Retcin tablet also contains the inactive ingredients: lactose, maize starch, potato starch, sodium starch glycollate, magnesium stearate, cellacephate, diethylphthalate, colour Ponceau 4R (E124), carnauba wax, beeswax, acetone, methanol, dichloromethane.

Retcin is a round, red, film-coated tablet of 250 mg strength, available in containers of 28, 30, 50, 56, 60, 84, 100, 250, 500 and 1000 tablets.

The name and address of the Product Licence holder of Retcin tablets is Chelonia Heathcare Limited, 11 Boumpoulinas, 1060 Nicosia, Cyprus.

The name and address of the manufacturer of Retcin tablets is Meridian Healthcare (UK) Ltd., Rich Industrial Estate, Chatfield Road, off York Road, Battersea, London SW11 3SE.

How does Retcin work?

Retcin is an antibiotic that acts on bacteria sensitive to Erythromycin.

Why have you been prescribed Retcin?

Retcin is used for the prevention and treatment of infections caused by Erythromycin sensitive organisms. It is used in the treatment of:

- Chest infections
- Skin and soft tissue infections
- Bone infections
- Mouth and dental infections
- Stomach infections
- Eye infections
- Sexually transmitted diseases
- Legionnaire's Disease

Before taking Retcin

Before taking this medicine, tell your doctor if you have ever had any unusual or allergic reactions to Erythromycin or any of the other ingredients of Retcin, or any other antibiotics. This product contains lactose and is unsuitable for people with lactase insufficiency, galactosaemia or glucose/galactose malabsorption syndrome. Retcin also contains the colour Ponceau 4R (E124) which may cause allergic-type reactions including asthma.

Allergy is more common in those people who are allergic to aspirin.

Also tell your doctor or pharmacist if you are allergic to any other substances such as foods, preservatives or dyes.

It is important that you tell your doctor if you are pregnant, breast-feeding or likely to become pregnant.

The presence of other medical problems may affect the use of this medicine. Tell your doctor if you have:

- liver problems for which you have or are receiving treatment
- kidney problems
- heart problems or a condition known as porphyria

Use in pregnancy and while breast-feeding

If you are pregnant or breast-feeding, think you may be pregnant or are planning to have a baby, ask your doctor or pharmacist for advice before taking this medicine.

The active ingredient of erythromycin may cross the placenta in pregnant women and is excreted in breast milk. Information from studies regarding the risk of birth defects is inconsistent, but some studies have reported heart defects following erythromycin use in early pregnancy.

Erythromycin should be used by women during pregnancy or while breast-feeding only if clearly needed.

Can you drive or operate machinery when taking Retcin?

Retcin will not affect your ability to drive or operate machinery.

Can you take Retcin with other medicines?

There are some medicines that can interfere with Retcin. It is very important to tell your doctor or pharmacist about all the medicines that you are taking, whether or not any medicines were prescribed by your doctor or bought without a prescription from the pharmacy or elsewhere. Your doctor will be able to identify medicines you should not take with Retcin.

Especially make sure to tell your doctor if you have or are taking a medicine known as **Terfenadine** (which you may have purchased over-the-counter), or **Astemizole** both used for hay fever and relief of allergies. They should not be taken together with Retcin, they could damage your heart.

Cisapride – for stomach disorders and **Pimozide** and **Sertindole**– for psychiatric disorders all cause irregular heart beat when taken with Retcin.

Ergotamine and **di-hydroergotamine** used for attacks of migraine which can lead to toxic reactions when taken with Erthromycin.

Retcin may increase the blood thinning effect of **coumarins.**

Corticosteroids, given by mouth, by injection or inhaled (used to help suppress the body's immune system - this is useful in treating a wide range of conditions).

Lomitapide (used to lower increased blood fats such as cholesterol and triglycerides). Taking this medicine at the same time as erythromycin may lead to a rise in enzymes produced by liver cells (transaminases), which indicates that the liver is under stress and may lead to liver problems.

Other medicines which interfere with Retcin include:

Simvastatin and **Atorvastatin** used to reduce cholesterol levels. **Digoxin** and **Disopyramide** used to treat heartconditions, **Warfarin** used to thin the blood, **Carbamazepine** used to treat epilepsy and to prevent manic-depressive illness, **Phenytoin** used to treat epilepsy, **Eletriptan** – for migraine, **Theophylline** used to treat obstruction of airways including severe asthma, **Ciclosporin** used to treat psoriasis, **Mizolastine** for allergic or itchy skin rash, **Methylprednisolone** to treat inflammatory conditions, **Bromocriptine** and **Cabergoline** used in the treatment of Parkinson's Disease, **Triazolam** an anti-fungal medicine, **Ritonavir** to treat HIV, the sedatives **Midazolam** and **Zopiclone**, **Clozapine** for mental disorders, **Reboxetine** for depressive illness, **Tolterodine** for urinary problems, **Corticosteroids**, **Sirolimus** and **Tacrolimus** used following organ transplants, the antibacterial **Rifabutin**, **Lercanidipine** for high blood pressure and **Vinblastine** to stop the growth of certain cells.
Hydroxychloroquine or **chloroquine** (used to treat conditions including rheumatoid arthritis, or to treat or prevent malaria). Taking these medicines at the same time as erythromycin may increase the chance of getting abnormal heart rhythms and other serious side effects that affect your heart.

Retcin can also affect the blood concentration of certain other medicines you may be taking. Your doctor will have more information.

When and how to take Retcin tablets

Take this medicine by mouth and only in the doses prescribed by your doctor. Do not take more of it, and do not take it more often or for a longer time than your doctor ordered.

Usual dosages stated below:

The medicine is to be taken by mouth. Do not crush or bite, but swallow whole.

Adults and children over 8 years: 1-2 g (four to eight tablets) daily in divided doses for mild to moderate infection. This dosage may be increased to 4 g (sixteen tablets) daily in divided doses. Tablets should be taken before or with meals.

Elderly: as for adults.

Length of medication with regard to treatment of particular infections:

Upper respiratory tract infections: 5 to 10 days

Lower respiratory tract infections:7 to 14 days or until the signs and symptoms indicate that the condition is cured. Legionnaire's Disease requires prolonged treatment.

Skin and soft tissue infections:5 to 10 days. Acne may require prolonged treatment.

Sexually transmitted diseases:

Gonorrhoea and syphilis: 10 to 21 days. Some conditions may require prolonged treatment.

Oral and dental infections: at least 5 days.

Eye infections - Chlamydia inclusion conjunctivitis: 3 weeks.

Gastro-intestinal infections - Campylobacter: a minimum of 5 days.

What to do if too many tablets are taken at the same time?

If you think you may have taken an overdose of this medicine, contact your doctor at once or go to the nearest hospital casualty department. Tell the doctor in charge, or the nurse or pharmacist, that you are taking this medicine and also tell them whether you have taken any other medicines. Take with you any remaining tablets in their original container so they may be identified.

What if you miss a dose?

If you miss a dose, skip the missed dose and go back to your regular dosing schedule. Do not take two doses at once.

If you feel that this medicine is not working as well after you have taken it for a short time (1-2 weeks) do not increase the dose, instead check with your doctor.

Your doctor will prescribe the lowest dose necessary to control your symptoms.

What side effects can Retcin cause?

Like all medicines, Erythromycin can have side effects.

If you start to suffer from a rash, itching or any other skin trouble whilst taking this medicine, **STOP** the treatment and tell your doctor **immediately**. These may be signs of allergy to this medicine. If you develop swelling of the face and/or throat or difficulty in breathing you may require emergency treatment and you should seek medical advice immediately.

Contact a doctor immediately if you experience a serious skin reaction: a red, scaly rash with bumps under the skin and blisters (exanthematous pustulosis). The frequency of this side effect is not known (cannot be estimated from the available data).

Hepatitis and liver dysfunction may occur. This may show as yellowing of the skin and/or whites of the eyes, abdominal discomfort and loss of appetite.

If you are taking a high dose of your medicine, you may find that you lose your hearing, which should only be temporary.

Erythromycin can sometimes cause nausea, vomiting, stomach pain or diarrhoea. A diarrhoeal disease (pseudomembranous colitis) may also occur. This may show as watery diarrhoea, fever and cramps. Occasionally Retcin can cause a skin condition known as erythema multiforme, which is characterised by patches of red, raised skin that often look like targets, and unusual tiredness, fever and painful joints. Rarely flaking of the skin may occur due to a condition known as toxic epidermal necrolysis.

On rare occasions you may experience muscle weakness or your heart may be affected and you may experience chest pain and irregular heart beat.

If you have these or any other ill-effects, tell your doctor.

Storing your medicine

You must keep the medicine in a safe place where children cannot get it. Your medicine could harm them.

Keep container tightly closed. Protect from light. Store below 25°C in a dry place. Keep the tablets in the container in which they were given to you.

If your doctor tells you to stop the treatment, return any remaining tablets to the doctor or pharmacist.

On the label you will find the words "Expiry Date" followed by numbers indicating the day, month and year. This is the date when the medicine is no longer fit for use. Do not use the medicine after this date but return it to your doctor or pharmacist.

A reminder

REMEMBER this medicine is for you. Never give it to someone else, even if their symptoms are the same as yours. This leaflet does not contain the complete information about your medicine. If you have any questions or are not sure about anything, ask your doctor or pharmacist who have access to additional information.

This leaflet was revised in February 2023.