

# Cardizem

Contributed by Robert A Wilson  
Sunday, 11 February 2007  
Last Updated Friday, 08 February 2008

Generic Name: Diltiazem HCl

Classification: Calcium Channel Blocker - Available by prescription only.

Other Names: Cardizem-CD, Cardizem-SR, Dilacor-XR, Diltiazem, Tiazac

Used to treat:

- Angina - Chest pain due to blockage of arteries to the heart
- Hypertension - High blood pressure

(These are common indications for this medication. There may be additional conditions not listed here. Check with your doctor if you have questions about your specific condition).

{mospagebreak title=Directions}

General Directions for Taking Medication:

- Take only as directed. DO NOT discontinue medication abruptly, even if you feel better. May cause a rebound effect of higher blood pressure.
- If you miss a dose, take the medicine as soon as you remember. If it is time for your next dose, take only 1 dose. DO NOT double up the doses.
- DO NOT crush, break or chew sustained-release forms of this medication.
- If dizzy due to hypotension (low blood pressure), change positions slowly.
- Learn how to monitor your blood pressure at home and keep a diary for your doctor.
- Take with meals or a tall glass of milk to prevent upset stomach.
- Practice good dental hygiene to prevent gum inflammation (swelling, tenderness, and pain).
- Talk to your doctor about exercise, tips to stop smoking, and less salt in your diet.
- Tell all healthcare providers that you are taking this medicine prior to having any procedure.
- Keep enough medication on hand especially during holidays, weekends and vacations.
- Talk to your doctor about the need to wear a medical alert pendant or bracelet. There are many products that provide information to health care providers about your medicines and specific condition in

case of an emergency.

- See your doctor regularly to monitor the effectiveness of this medication with lab tests, blood pressure screenings, and a physical exam.

{mospagebreak title=Contraindications}

Contraindications:

- Allergies - Hypersensitivity to this medication or its components
- Patients with Heart Block (unless pacemaker in place)
- Patients with low blood pressures, a recent heart attack, or pulmonary congestion
- Use with caution in:
  - Pregnancy, breastfeeding, and children - Talk to your doctor about the risks and benefits.
  - Patients with liver disease, kidney disease, or history of arrhythmias (irregular heart beats)
  - Elderly patients - May require smaller dosages to control symptoms.

{mospagebreak title=Side Effects}

Common Side Effects:

- May occur during the first few days after beginning therapy, but usually resolve:
  - Dizziness, lightheadedness, headache, or blurred vision; bloating, heartburn, or nausea and vomiting; muscle cramps, weakness, stiff joints, and tremors; flushing, sweating, and a rash; confusion, anxiety, difficulty sleeping or nervousness

Serious Side Effects:

- Notify your doctor immediately if you experience any of the following:
  - Swelling of hands or feet; an irregular heartbeat; shortness of breath; severe headache; or profound dizziness
  - Allergic reaction symptoms such as a red skin rash; itching; swelling of the face, lips, tongue, and throat; wheezing; chest pain; and difficulty breathing

{mospagebreak title=Interactions}

Interactions:

- Drug - There are many medications, both over-the-counter and prescription, which will alter the action of this medication. Some include heart medications; antacids that contain calcium; calcium supplements; vitamin D; barbiturates; seizure medicines; narcotics; other antihypertensives; anti-tuberculosis drugs; antihistamines; and decongestants.
- It is extremely important that you consult with your doctor about dosing schedules if you take a variety of medications along with this medication. **DO NOT** take any new medication without talking with your

doctor first.

Warnings:

- Overdose - Can lead to severe hypotension, abnormally slow heart rates, and heart block.
- DO NOT drink alcohol or use over-the-counter cold remedies when taking this medication.
- DO NOT drive or operate heavy machinery until you determine the extent of dizziness and drowsiness. Your doctor may be able to adjust your dose to control these side effects.
- Keep this medication and all others out of reach of children and pets.

General Dosage Information:

Dosing is individually based. Talk to your doctor about your specific dosing schedule:

Storage:

- Keep at room temperature.
- Protect from sunlight and moisture.
- DO NOT store in the bathroom.