

Nitrofurantoin (Nifuran®)

What does nitrofurantoin do?

Nitrofurantoin is an antibacterial medicine specifically used to treat or prevent urinary tract infections.

Urinary tract infections are caused by the presence of bacteria in the urinary system. Nitrofurantoin acts by killing or stopping the growth of the bacteria.

How should you take it?

- ★ Nitrofurantoin should be taken at regular intervals with food and a glass of water, until the course is finished.
- ★ The length of time you will need to take this medicine will differ depending on whether you are taking it for treatment or prevention. It is important to follow the instructions of your doctor.

What if you miss a dose?

If you have just missed your scheduled dose, take it as soon as you remember and continue as before. If you have forgotten to take a dose of nitrofurantoin and it is almost time to take your next scheduled dose, then skip the dose you have missed, and continue taking your nitrofurantoin as directed by your doctor.

Can you take other medicines?

Some medicines may interact with nitrofurantoin including:

- ★ antacids containing magnesium trisilicate (e.g Mylanta)
- ★ probenecid and sulphapyridine (medicines used in gout)
- ★ quinolone antibiotics (norfloxacin or ciprofloxacin)

Tell your doctor about all other medicines or treatments that you may be taking including vitamins and herbal medicines.

Important points to remember:

- ★ Tell your doctor if you have any medical conditions, especially a history of lung disease, liver disease, kidney disease, peripheral neuropathy, optic neuritis, anaemia, diabetes mellitus, electrolyte imbalance, vitamin B deficiency, or other debilitating disease
- ★ Nitrofurantoin may temporarily turn your urine to a dark yellow or brown colour.
- ★ Nitrofurantoin may alter the effectiveness of the oral contraceptive pill. Additional protection should be used during and for 7 days after finishing the treatment.
- ★ Tell your doctor if you are pregnant or breastfeeding before taking nitrofurantoin

Side effects:

All medicines can have some unwanted effects. Sometimes they are serious, most of the time they are not.

Tell your doctor or nurse if you notice any of the following and they worry you:

- ★ nausea or vomiting
- ★ headache
- ★ diarrhoea or flatulence

Tell your doctor immediately if you experience:

- ★ severe abdominal pain
- ★ numbness or tingling in the fingers or toes
- ★ visual disturbances
- ★ taste disturbances
- ★ dizziness or vertigo
- ★ drowsiness or malaise
- ★ rash, swelling of the face, lips, mouth, tongue or throat
- ★ joint or muscle pain
- ★ fever or chills
- ★ cough, chest pain or difficulty in breathing
- ★ yellowing of the eyes or skin (jaundice), feeling generally unwell and having poor appetite

Do not be alarmed by this list of possible side effects. You may not experience any of them.