# TETRACYCLINE

*tet-rah-sye-kleen*

## What does it do?

*Tetracycline* is an antibiotic used to treat bacterial infections.

## Before you start

- Tell your doctor if you have liver problems.
- Tell your doctor if you are pregnant, planning to become pregnant, or breastfeeding.

## How should you take it?

Take *tetracycline* regularly as directed with a large glass of water. Take it on an empty stomach, one hour before or two hours after food. Keep taking it until the course is finished, even if you start to feel better.

*Tetracycline* can damage your oesophagus (food pipe). To avoid this, swallow the tablet or capsule whole with a large glass of water. Do not crush or chew it. Stay upright for at least 30 minutes after taking a dose.

## What if you forget a dose?

Take the missed dose as soon as possible and continue as directed.

## Can you take other medicines?

Some medicines available without a prescription may react with *tetracycline* including:

- products containing aluminium, calcium, iron or magnesium, such as antacids (e.g. Mylanta®) or multivitamins

Tell your pharmacist or doctor about all medicines or treatments that you may be taking, including vitamins, herbal products or recreational drugs.

## What side effects might you notice?

| Side Effects | Recommended action |
|---|---|
| Symptoms of allergy including: skin rash, itching, swelling, trouble breathing<br>Symptoms of liver problems including: yellow skin or eyes, itching, dark urine, pale bowel motions, abdominal pain<br>Headache, changes in vision, pounding in one or both ears (may be intracranial hypertension)<br>Trouble swallowing, chest pain, indigestion or heartburn (new or getting worse) | Tell your doctor immediately |
| Severe or persistent diarrhoea, abdominal pain | Tell your doctor |
| Stomach upset<br>More sensitive to sunlight (sunburn or rash) | Tell your doctor if troublesome |

If you notice any other effects, discuss them with your doctor or pharmacist.

## Other information:

- Protect yourself from too much sunlight while being treated with *tetracycline*. Always cover up and apply a thick layer of broad spectrum sunscreen (at least SPF 30) when outside. Do not use sunbeds.
- *Tetracycline* is not usually given to children under 12 years of age. Talk to your doctor.
- *Tetracycline* is not registered for use in New Zealand. Discuss with your doctor.