



COTRIMOXAZOLE (TMP/SMX)

80 mg/400 mg single-strength tablet
160 mg/800 mg double-strength tablet
40-200 mg/5 mL oral suspension



How does this medication work ?



Cotrimoxazole is an antibiotic used in the prevention and treatment of *Pneumocystis carinii* pneumonia (PCP). It is also used to treat a number of other bacterial infections.

How do I take this medication ?

Your dosage

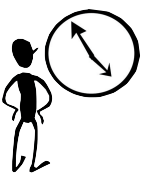
Cotrimoxazole	
•	_____ single-strength tablet(s) _____ DS tablet(s)
•	_____ times per day _____ times per week
Monday	_____ Tuesday _____ Wednesday _____ Thursday _____
Friday	_____ Saturday _____ Sunday _____

Cotrimoxazole should, ideally, be taken on an empty stomach - i.e. 1 hour before or 2 hours after meals.

If you use the oral suspension, shake well before taking the recommended dose.

Unless your doctor tells you otherwise, drink at least 1.5 litres (8 to 10 glasses) of water or other liquids each day so that you system can eliminate the medication better.

It is important to take cotrimoxazole regularly, at the same time each day, for the duration of your treatment, even if you feel better after a while. *Never stop your treatment without first speaking to your doctor.*



What if I forget to take a dose ?

Take the dose you missed as soon as possible, and then continue with your regular schedule.

If it is nearly time for your next dose, however, just take that one according to the normal schedule. Do not double up doses.



What are the side effects of this medication ?

Some people may experience gastrointestinal (digestive) effects such as diarrhea, abdominal pain, nausea or vomiting. Take cotrimoxazole with food to lessen these effects. If they occur and persist, consult your pharmacist, doctor or dietician for ways to manage them.

You may note the appearance of a skin eruption. If this happens (rash, redness with or without itching), **advise your doctor immediately.** Some skin eruptions are mild and your doctor can treat them using an antihistamine (e.g. Benadryl[®], Atarax[®], etc.) or an anti-inflammatory agent (e.g. prednisone, hydrocortisone).

If the reaction is strong (i.e. you have one or more of the following symptoms: fever, swelling, blisters, mouth ulcers, red eyes, generalized discomfort, joint and muscle pain), **stop taking cotrimoxazole and consult your doctor immediately.**

Before taking this medication, tell your doctor or pharmacist if you are allergic to the sulfa found in certain antibiotics, diuretics (medication to eliminate water) or certain diabetic medications.

Cotrimoxazole may make your skin more sensitive to the sun or sun lamps. To prevent this, always use a sun screen before going out in the sun or using a sun lamp, and avoid prolonged exposure. Sun screens recommended for photosensitivity (increased sensitivity of the skin to the sun) are Ombrelle 60 and Anthélios "L".

Cotrimoxazole may sometimes affect your blood and cause neutropenia, anemia or thrombocytopenia.

Neutropenia is a reduction in the number of white blood cells, which are necessary to combat infection.

Anemia is a reduction in the number of red blood cells, and may result in breathlessness, fatigue or unusual weakness, loss of appetite and pale skin.

Inform your doctor if this occurs.

Thrombocytopenia is a reduction in the number of platelets (blood elements required for coagulation, to stop bleeding). This can take the form of bruising or unexplained bleeding. **Contact your doctor** if you note that your stools are very dark, there is blood in your urine, red spots on your skin, and if you have any wounds that are slow to heal.

Your doctor will monitor your blood components by means of regular blood tests.



Can I take cotrimoxazole with my other medications ?

Some medications can increase the risk of side effects when combined with cotrimoxazole.

Consult your doctor or pharmacist before taking any new medication, whether on prescription or not, any natural products or recreational drugs.



Can I drink alcohol if I'm on cotrimoxazole?

Avoid the excessive or regular consumption of alcoholic beverages (beer, wine, spirits) as these may interact with some of your medications.

However, do not miss a dose of your medication because you want to have a drink. Unless your doctor tells you otherwise, reasonable (social) consumption should not be harmful to your health.

What if I'm pregnant or breast-feeding ?



Cotrimoxazole must not be prescribed to women during the last trimester of pregnancy.

As the virus can be transmitted via maternal milk, breast-feeding is not recommended in women who are HIV-positive.

Storage

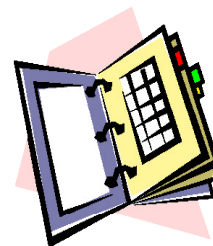
Keep cotrimoxazole in a dry place, at room temperature (15 to 30°C or 59 to 86°F). Avoid humidity (bathrooms, etc.).



Place out of the sight and reach of children.

General advice

Always keep your appointments with your doctor and the care team, so that your condition can be closely monitored.



If you have any questions about your medications or need help on how to schedule when to take them, please contact your doctor or pharmacist, who know your medication well.

Contact person: _____

Telephone : _____