

Fluconazole
(floo kon' na zole)

Why is this medication prescribed?

Fluconazole is used to treat fungal infections, including yeast infections of the vagina, mouth, throat, esophagus (tube leading from the mouth to the stomach), abdomen (area between the chest and waist), lungs, blood, and other organs. Fluconazole is also used to treat meningitis (infection of the membranes covering the brain and spine) caused by fungus. Fluconazole is also used to prevent yeast infections in patients who are likely to become infected because they are being treated with chemotherapy or radiation therapy before a bone marrow transplant (replacement of unhealthy spongy tissue inside the bones with healthy tissue). Fluconazole is in a class of antifungals called triazoles. It works by slowing the growth of fungi that cause infection.

How should this medicine be used?

Fluconazole comes as a tablet and a suspension (liquid) to take by mouth. It is usually taken once a day. You may need to take only one dose of fluconazole, or you may need to take fluconazole for several weeks or longer. The length of your treatment depends on your condition and on how well you respond to fluconazole. Follow the directions on your prescription label carefully, and ask your clinician or pharmacist to explain any part you do not understand. Take fluconazole exactly as directed. Do not take more or less of it or take it more often than prescribed by your clinician.

- Your clinician may tell you to take a double dose of fluconazole on the first day of your treatment. Follow these directions carefully.
- Shake the liquid well before each use to mix the medication evenly.
- Continue to take fluconazole until your clinician tells you that you should stop, even if you feel better. Do not stop taking fluconazole without talking to your clinician. If you stop taking fluconazole too soon, your infection may come back after a short time.

Other uses for this medicine:

Fluconazole is also sometimes used to treat serious fungal infections that begin in the lungs and can spread through the body and fungal infections of the eye, prostate (a male reproductive organ), skin and nails. Fluconazole is also sometimes used to prevent fungal infections in people who are likely to become infected because they have human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) or cancer or have had a transplant operation (surgery to remove an organ and replace it with a donor or artificial organ). Talk to your clinician about the possible risks of using this drug for your condition. This medication may be prescribed for other uses; ask your clinician or pharmacist for more information.

What special precautions should I follow?

Before taking fluconazole, tell your clinician and pharmacist if you are allergic to fluconazole, other antifungal medications such as itraconazole (Sporanox), ketoconazole (Nizoral), or voriconazole (Vfend) or any other medications. Do not take cisapride (Propulsid) while taking fluconazole. Tell your clinician and pharmacist what prescription and nonprescription medications, vitamins, nutritional supplements, and herbal products you are taking, especially amiodarone (Cordarone); anticoagulants ('blood thinners') such as warfarin (Coumadin); astemizole (Hismanal) (not available in the United States); benzodiazepines such as midazolam (Versed); clopidogrel (Plavix), cyclosporine (Neoral, Sandimmune); disopyramide (Norpace); diuretics ('water pills') such as hydrochlorothiazide (HydroDIURIL, Microzide); dofetilide (Tikosyn); erythromycin (E.E.S, E-Mycin, Erythrocin); isoniazid (INH, Nydravid); moxifloxacin (Avelox); oral contraceptives (birth control pills); oral medicine for diabetes such as glipizide (Glucotrol), glyburide (Diabeta, Micronase, Glycron, others), and tolbutamide (Orinase); phenytoin (Dilantin); pimozone (Orap); procainamide (Procanbid, Pronestyl); quinidine (Quinidex); rifabutin (Mycobutin); rifampin (Rifadin, Rimactane); sotalol (Betapace); sparfloxacin (Zagam); tacrolimus (Prograf); terfenadine (Seldane) (not available in the US); theophylline (TheoDur); thioridazine (Mellaril); valproic acid (Depakene, Depakote); and zidovudine (Retrovir). Tell your clinician if you drink or have ever drunk large amounts of alcohol and if you have or have ever had cancer; acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS); an irregular heartbeat; or heart, kidney, or liver disease. Tell your clinician if you are pregnant, plan to become pregnant, or are breast-feeding. If you become pregnant while taking fluconazole, call your clinician.

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What special dietary instructions should I follow?

Unless your clinician tells you otherwise, continue your normal diet.

What should I do if I forget a dose?

Take the missed dose as soon as you remember it. However, if it is almost time for the next dose, skip the missed dose and continue your regular dosing schedule. Do not take a double dose to make up for a missed one.

What side effects can this medication cause? Fluconazole may cause side effects. Tell your clinician if any of these symptoms are severe or do not go away:

- Headache
- Dizziness
- Diarrhea
- Stomach pain
- Heartburn
- Change in ability to taste food

Some side effects can be serious. If you experience any of the following symptoms, call your clinician immediately:

- Nausea
- Extreme tiredness
- Unusual bruising or bleeding
- Lack of energy
- Loss of appetite
- Pain in the upper right part of the stomach
- Yellowing of the skin or eyes
- Flu-like symptoms
- Dark urine
- Pale stools
- Seizures
- Rash
- Hives
- Itching
- Swelling of the face, throat, tongue, lips, eyes, hands, feet, ankles, or lower legs
- Difficulty breathing or swallowing

If you experience a serious side effect, you or your clinician may send a report to the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) MedWatch Adverse Event Reporting program online [at <http://www.fda.gov/Safety/MedWatch>] or by phone [1-800-332-1088].

What storage conditions are needed for this medicine?

Keep this medication in the container it came in, tightly closed, and out of reach of children. Store it at room temperature and away from excess heat and moisture (not in the bathroom). Throw away any medication that is outdated or no longer needed. Throw away any unused liquid medication after 14 days. Talk to your pharmacist about the proper disposal of your medication.

In case of emergency/overdose:

In case of overdose, call your local poison control center at 1-800-222-1222. If the victim has collapsed or is not breathing, call local emergency services at 911.

Symptoms of overdose may include:

- hallucinations (seeing things or hearing voices that do not exist)
- extreme fear that others are trying to harm you

What other information should I know?

- Keep all appointments with your clinician and the laboratory. Your clinician may order certain lab tests to check your response to fluconazole.
- Do not let anyone else take your medication. Ask your pharmacist if you have questions about refilling your prescription. If you still have symptoms of infection after you finish taking the fluconazole, call your clinician.
- It is important for you to keep a written list of all of the prescription and nonprescription (over-the-counter) medicines you are taking, as well as any products such as vitamins, minerals, or other dietary supplements. You

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should bring this list with you each time you visit a clinician or if you are admitted to a hospital. It is also important information to carry with you in case of emergencies.



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