

# Taking Cilostazol for Peripheral Arterial Disease (PAD)



Cilostazol is a medicine that can relieve claudication. Claudication is a common symptom of peripheral arterial disease (PAD). It causes pain in your legs when you walk or exercise. This happens because of reduced blood flow to your leg muscles.

## How cilostazol works

Cilostazol works by improving blood flow in the smallest blood vessels. This lets you walk farther without pain. You can then be more active and do more of the things you like to do. Cilostazol can be used safely with many medicines. These include medicines used to reduce the risk of heart attack and stroke. But some medicines can affect how cilostazol works in your body. So your healthcare provider needs to know what other medicines you take. You may need to use cilostazol for 1 to 3 months before it starts to work. If you see no improvement after using it for 3 months, then your provider will likely take you off it. You should not use cilostazol if you have heart failure.

## Taking cilostazol safely

Before taking cilostazol, tell your provider about any medicines you are taking. This includes:

- All prescription medicines
- Over-the-counter medicines such as aspirin or ibuprofen
- Herbs, vitamins, and other supplements

Don't have grapefruit or grapefruit juice when taking cilostazol. These may cause a harmful interaction. Also tell your provider if you have a history of heart failure, liver disease, or any other health problems. Always take medicines as directed.

## Tips for taking cilostazol

- **Have a routine.** Take cilostazol when you get up each morning. Or take it when getting ready for bed at night.
- **Don't skip doses.** You must take this medicine daily for it to work.
- **Take on an empty stomach.** Take it either 1 hour before a meal or 3 hours after, with a full glass of water.
- **Keep track of what you take.** A pillbox with the days of the week marked can help, especially if you take several medicines. Or use a list or chart to keep track.

## When to call your healthcare provider

Cilostazol can cause side effects. If you have problems, changing your dose may help. Call your provider or get medical help right away if you have any of the following:

- Rapid or irregular heartbeat
- Chest pain
- Shortness of breath
- Loose bowel movements or diarrhea

- Bloody or painful urine
- Severe headache
- Fever, chills, or flu symptoms
- Upset stomach
- Allergic reaction such as hives, rash, or swelling of your face, lips, tongue, or throat

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