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2. Codeine/guaifenesin

Codeine and guaifenesin

Generic name: codeine and guaifenesin [*KOE-deen-and-gwye-FEN-a-sin*]

Brand names: [Cheracol with Codeine](#), [Mar-cof CG](#), [Allfen CD](#), [Cheratussin AC](#), [Codar GF](#), ... [show all 40 brands](#)

Dosage forms: oral liquid (7.5 mg-225 mg/5 mL), oral syrup (10 mg-100 mg/5 mL)

Drug class: [Upper respiratory combinations](#)



[Medically reviewed](#) by Drugs.com on Oct 16, 2023. Written by [Cerner Multum](#).

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What is codeine and guaifenesin?

[Codeine](#) is a narcotic cough suppressant. It affects the signals in the brain that trigger cough reflex.

[Guaifenesin](#) is an expectorant. It helps loosen congestion in your chest and throat, making it easier to cough out through your mouth.

Codeine and guaifenesin is a combination medicine used to treat cough and chest congestion caused by allergies, the [common cold](#), or the flu.

codeine and guaifenesin will not treat a cough that is caused by smoking, asthma, or [emphysema](#).

Codeine and guaifenesin may also be used for purposes not listed in this medication guide.

Codeine and guaifenesin side effects

Get emergency medical help if you have **signs of an allergic reaction**: hives; difficult breathing; swelling of your face, lips, tongue, or throat.

Like other narcotic medications, codeine can slow your breathing. Death may occur if breathing becomes too weak.

A person caring for you should seek emergency medical attention if you have slow breathing with long pauses, blue colored lips, or if you are hard to wake up.

This medicine may cause serious side effects. Stop using this medicine and call your doctor at once if you have:

- noisy breathing, sighing, shallow breathing;
- a [slow heart rate](#) or weak pulse;
- severe dizziness or [drowsiness](#);

- confusion, hallucinations, unusual thoughts or behavior;
- little or no urinating;
- severe [constipation](#); or
- slow heart rate, weak or shallow breathing.

Serious side effects may be more likely in older adults and those who are overweight, malnourished, or debilitated.

Common side effects of codeine and guaifenesin may include:

- constipation; or
- mild drowsiness.

This is not a complete list of side effects and others may occur. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.

 [Codeine / guaifenesin side effects](#) (more detail)

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Guaifenesin

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Reviews & ratings

7.1 / 10

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Warnings

Codeine can slow or stop your breathing, and may be habit-forming. **MISUSE OF codeine and guaifenesin CAN CAUSE ADDICTION, OVERDOSE, OR DEATH, especially in a child or other person using the medicine without a prescription.**

Do not give this medicine to anyone under 18.

Before taking this medicine

You should not take this medicine if you are allergic to codeine or guaifenesin.

In some people, codeine breaks down rapidly in the liver and reaches higher than normal levels in the body. This can cause dangerously slow breathing and may cause death, especially in a child.

Do not give this medicine to anyone under 18.

To make sure codeine and guaifenesin is safe for you, tell your doctor if you have ever had:

- a cough with mucus;

- asthma, COPD, or other breathing disorder;
- blockage in your digestive tract (stomach or intestines);
- a [head injury](#) or [brain tumor](#);
- [low blood pressure](#); or
- drug or alcohol addiction.

If you use codeine while you are pregnant, your baby could become dependent on the drug. This can cause life-threatening withdrawal symptoms in the baby after it is born. Babies born dependent on habit-forming medicine may need medical treatment for several weeks. Tell your doctor if you are pregnant or plan to become pregnant.

Do not breast-feed. Codeine can pass into breast milk and may cause drowsiness, breathing problems, or death in a nursing baby. **Do not breast-feed.**

How should I take codeine and guaifenesin?

Follow all directions on your prescription label. Codeine can slow or stop your breathing. **Never use codeine and guaifenesin in larger amounts, or for longer than prescribed.** Cough or cold medicine is usually taken only for a short time until your symptoms clear up.

Codeine may be habit-forming, even at regular doses. Never share codeine and guaifenesin with another person, especially someone with a history of drug abuse or addiction. **MISUSE OF NARCOTIC MEDICINE CAN CAUSE ADDICTION, OVERDOSE, OR DEATH, especially in a child or other person using the medicine without a prescription.** Selling or giving away codeine is against the law.

Measure liquid medicine with the dosing syringe provided, or with a special dose-measuring spoon or medicine cup. If you do not have a dose-measuring device, ask your pharmacist for one.

Call your doctor if your symptoms do not improve after 7 days of treatment, or if you have a fever with a [headache](#) or skin rash.

Store at room temperature away from moisture and heat. Do not freeze. Keep track of the amount of medicine used from each new bottle. Codeine is a drug of abuse and you should be aware if anyone is using your medicine improperly or without a prescription.

Codeine and guaifenesin dosing information

Usual Adult Dose for Cough:

1 dose orally every 4 to 6 hours as needed

-Codeine: Single dose: up to 20 mg; Maximum dose: 120 mg in 24 hours

-Guaifenesin: Single dose: up to 400 mg; Maximum dose: 2400 mg in 24 hours

Maximum dose should not exceed maximum dose of either of the single ingredient doses

Comments:

-Liquid preparations should be measured with an accurate milliliter measuring device.

-This combination drug should not be used in patients with chronic pulmonary disease or [shortness of breath](#) unless directed by a health care professional.

Uses: Temporary relief of coughs due to minor throat and bronchial irritations as may occur with the common cold or inhaled irritants; helps loosen phlegm and thin bronchial secretions to make cough more productive.

i [Detailed Codeine / guaifenesin dosage information](#)

What happens if I miss a dose?

Since codeine and guaifenesin is used when needed, you may not be on a dosing schedule. If you are on a schedule, use the missed dose as soon as you remember. Skip the missed dose if it is almost time for your next scheduled dose.

Do not use extra medicine to make up the missed dose.

What happens if I overdose?

Seek emergency medical attention or call the Poison Help line at 1-800-222-1222. **A codeine overdose can be fatal, especially in a child or other person using the medicine without a prescription.** Overdose symptoms may include slow breathing and heart rate, severe drowsiness, muscle weakness, cold and clammy skin, pinpoint pupils, and [fainting](#).

What should I avoid while taking codeine and guaifenesin?

codeine and guaifenesin may impair your thinking or reactions. Avoid driving or operating machinery until you know how this medicine will affect you. Dizziness or severe drowsiness can cause falls or other accidents.

Do not drink alcohol. Dangerous side effects or death could occur.

Ask a doctor or pharmacist before using any other cough or cold medicine. Many combination medicines contain guaifenesin. Taking certain products together can cause you to get too much of this medicine.

What other drugs will affect codeine and guaifenesin?

Taking codeine and guaifenesin with other drugs that make you sleepy or slow your breathing can cause dangerous side effects or death. Ask your doctor before taking a sleeping pill, narcotic pain medicine, prescription cough medicine, a muscle relaxer, or medicine for [anxiety](#), [depression](#), or [seizures](#).

Other drugs may interact with codeine and guaifenesin, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, [vitamins](#), and [herbal products](#). Tell your doctor about all your current medicines and any medicine you start or stop using.

i [Codeine / guaifenesin drug interactions](#) (more detail)

Does codeine/guaifenesin interact with my other drugs?

Enter medications to view a detailed interaction report using our [Drug Interaction Checker](#).

codeine/guaifenesin

+

Enter a drug name

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Patient resources

Other brands

[Cheratussin AC](#), [Guaiaussin AC](#), [Virtussin A/C](#), [Cheracol with Codeine](#), ... +10 more

Professional resources

- [Codeine Phosphate and Guaifenesin prescribing information](#)

Related treatment guides

- [Cough](#)

Further information

Remember, keep this and all other medicines out of the reach of children, never share your medicines with others, and use this medication only for the indication prescribed.

Always consult your healthcare provider to ensure the information displayed on this page applies to your personal circumstances.

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DRUG STATUS

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5.6 / 10

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