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Vicodin

Generic name: [acetaminophen and hydrocodone](#) [a-SEET-a-MIN-oh-fen-and-hye-droe-KOE-done]

Drug class: [Narcotic analgesic combinations](#)

Medically reviewed by [Philip Thornton, DipPharm](#). Last updated on Aug 7, 2023.

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The Vicodin brand name has been **discontinued** in the U.S. If generic versions of this product have been approved by the FDA, there may be [generic equivalents available](#).

What is Vicodin?

Vicodin contains a combination of [acetaminophen](#) and [hydrocodone](#). Hydrocodone is an opioid pain medication. An opioid is sometimes called a narcotic. Acetaminophen is a less potent pain reliever that increases the effects of hydrocodone.

Vicodin tablets are used for the relief of moderate to moderately severe [pain](#).

Vicodin may also be used for purposes not listed in this medication guide.

Warnings

Hydrocodone can slow or stop your breathing. Never use this medicine in larger amounts, or for longer than prescribed. **Narcotic pain medicine may be habit-forming, even at regular doses.** Never share Vicodin with another person, especially someone with a history of drug abuse or addiction. Keep the medication in a place where others cannot get to it.

MISUSE OF NARCOTIC MEDICINE CAN CAUSE ADDICTION, OVERDOSE, OR DEATH, especially in a child or other person using the medicine without a prescription.

Do not use Vicodin if you have used a MAO inhibitor in the past 14 days, such as isocarboxazid, linezolid, methylene blue injection, phenelzine, rasagiline, selegiline, or tranylcypromine.

Do not take more of Vicodin than is recommended. **An overdose of acetaminophen can damage your liver or cause death.** Call your doctor at once if you have nausea, pain in your upper stomach, itching, loss of appetite, dark urine, clay-colored stools, or jaundice (yellowing of your skin or eyes).

Stop taking Vicodin and call your doctor right away if you have skin redness or a rash that spreads and causes

blistering and peeling.

Before taking this medicine

You should not use Vicodin if you are allergic to acetaminophen (Tylenol) or hydrocodone, or if you have recently used alcohol, sedatives, tranquilizers, or other narcotic medications.

Do not use this medicine if you have taken a MAO inhibitor in the past 14 days. A dangerous drug interaction could occur. MAO inhibitors include isocarboxazid, linezolid, phenelzine, rasagiline, selegiline, and tranylcypromine.

Some medicines can interact with hydrocodone and cause a serious condition called serotonin syndrome. Be sure your doctor knows if you also take medicine for depression, mental illness, Parkinson's disease, migraine headaches, serious infections, or prevention of nausea and vomiting. Ask your doctor before making any changes in how or when you take your medications.

You should not use Vicodin if you have:

- severe asthma or breathing problems; or
- a blockage in your stomach or intestines.

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

- breathing problems, sleep apnea (breathing stops during sleep);
- liver disease;
- a drug or alcohol addiction;
- kidney disease;
- a head injury or seizures;
- urination problems; or
- problems with your thyroid, pancreas, or gallbladder.

Vicodin is more likely to cause breathing problems in older adults and people who are severely ill, malnourished, or otherwise debilitated.

If you use narcotic medicine 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.

Ask a doctor before using opioid medicine if you are breastfeeding. Tell your doctor if you notice severe drowsiness or slow breathing in the nursing baby.

 [Vicodin pregnancy and breastfeeding warnings](#) (more detail)

How should I take Vicodin?

Take Vicodin exactly as prescribed. Follow all directions on your prescription label. Never take this medicine in larger amounts, or for longer than prescribed. An overdose can damage your liver or cause death. Tell your doctor if the medicine seems to stop working as well in relieving your pain.

Hydrocodone may be habit-forming, even at regular doses. Never share Vicodin 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 Vicodin is against the law.

If you need surgery or medical tests, tell the doctor ahead of time that you are using this medicine. You may need to stop using the medicine for a short time.

Do not stop using Vicodin suddenly after long-term use, or you could have unpleasant withdrawal symptoms. Ask your doctor how to safely stop using Vicodin.

Store at room temperature away from moisture and heat. Keep track of the amount of medicine used from each new bottle. Hydrocodone is a drug of abuse and you should be aware if anyone is using your medicine improperly or without a prescription.

Always check your bottle to make sure you have received the correct pills (same brand and type) of medicine prescribed by your doctor.

 [Detailed Vicodin dosage information](#)

What happens if I miss a dose?

Since Vicodin is taken as needed, you may not be on a dosing schedule. If you are taking the medication regularly, take 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 hydrocodone overdose can be fatal, especially in a child or other person using the medicine without a prescription.** Overdose symptoms may include severe drowsiness, pinpoint pupils, slow breathing, or no breathing.

Your doctor may recommend you get naloxone (a medicine to reverse an opioid overdose) and keep it with you at all times. A person caring for you can give the naloxone if you stop breathing or don't wake up. Your caregiver must still get emergency medical help and may need to perform CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) on you while waiting for help to arrive.

Anyone can buy naloxone from a pharmacy or local health department. Make sure any person caring for you knows where you keep naloxone and how to use it.

What to avoid

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

Ask a doctor or pharmacist before using any other cold, allergy, pain, or sleep medication. Acetaminophen (sometimes abbreviated as APAP) is contained in many combination medicines. **Taking certain products together can cause you to get too much acetaminophen which can lead to a fatal overdose.** Check the label to see if a medicine contains acetaminophen or APAP.

Avoid drinking alcohol. It may increase your risk of liver damage while taking acetaminophen.

Vicodin side effects

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

Opioid medicine can slow or stop your breathing, and death may occur. A person caring for you should give naloxone and/or seek emergency medical attention if you have slow breathing with long pauses, blue colored lips, or if you are hard to wake up.

In rare cases, acetaminophen may cause a severe skin reaction that can be fatal. This could occur even if you have taken acetaminophen in the past and had no reaction. **Stop taking Vicodin and call your doctor right away if you have skin redness or a rash that spreads and causes blistering and peeling.** If you have this type of reaction, you should never again take any medicine that contains acetaminophen.

Call your doctor at once if you have:

- noisy breathing, sighing, shallow breathing, breathing that stops during sleep;
- a light-headed feeling, like you might pass out;
- confusion, unusual thoughts or behavior;
- seizure (convulsions);
- easy bruising or bleeding;
- infertility, missed menstrual periods;
- impotence, sexual problems, loss of interest in sex;
- **liver problems** - nausea, upper stomach pain, itching, loss of appetite, dark urine, clay-colored stools, jaundice (yellowing of the skin or eyes);
- **low cortisol levels** - nausea, vomiting, loss of appetite, dizziness, worsening tiredness or weakness; or
- **high levels of serotonin in the body** - agitation, hallucinations, fever, sweating, shivering, fast heart rate, muscle stiffness, twitching, loss of coordination, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea.

Serious breathing problems may be more likely in older adults and in those who are debilitated or have wasting syndrome or chronic breathing disorders.

Common Vicodin side effects include:

- drowsiness, headache;
- upset stomach, constipation;
- blurred vision; or
- dry mouth.

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.

 [Vicodin side effects](#) (more detail)

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What other drugs will affect Vicodin?

You may have breathing problems or withdrawal symptoms if you start or stop taking certain other medicines.

Tell your doctor if you also use an antibiotic, antifungal medication, heart or blood pressure medication, seizure medication, or medicine to treat HIV or hepatitis C.

Vicodin can interact with many other drugs and cause dangerous side effects or death. Be sure your doctor knows if you also use:

- cold or allergy medicines, bronchodilator asthma/COPD medication, or a diuretic ("water pill");
- medicines for motion sickness, irritable bowel syndrome, or overactive bladder;
- **other narcotic medications** - opioid pain medicine or prescription cough medicine;
- **a sedative like Valium** - diazepam, alprazolam, lorazepam, Xanax, Klonopin, Versed, and others;
- **drugs that make you sleepy or slow your breathing** - a sleeping pill, muscle relaxer, medicine to treat mood disorders or mental illness; or
- **drugs that affect serotonin levels in your body** - a stimulant, or medicine for depression, Parkinson's disease, migraine headaches, serious infections, or nausea and vomiting.

This list is not complete. Other drugs may interact with acetaminophen and hydrocodone, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal products. **Not all possible interactions are listed here.**

 [Vicodin drug interactions](#) (more detail)

Does Vicodin interact with my other drugs?

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

Vicodin

+

Enter a drug name

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Patient resources

Other brands

[Norco](#), [Lortab](#), [Hycet](#), [Lorcet](#), ... [+5 more](#)

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Other brands

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Further information


Remember, keep this and all other medicines out of the reach of children, never share your medicines with others, and use Vicodin 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

Availability
 Discontinued

Pregnancy & Lactation
 Risk data available

CSA Schedule*
2 High potential for abuse

Approval History
 Drug history at FDA



User Reviews & Ratings

7.7 / 10

[146 Reviews](#)

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