

[Home](#)

2. Quinine

Quinine

Generic name: quinine [*KWYE-nine*]**Brand names:** [Qualaquin](#), QM-260, Quinamm**Dosage form:** oral capsule (324 mg)**Drug class:** [Antimalarial quinolines](#)[Medically reviewed](#) by Drugs.com on Mar 25, 2025. Written by [Cerner Multum](#).[Uses](#) [Side effects](#) [Warnings](#) [Before taking](#) [Dosage](#) [Interactions](#)

What is quinine?

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration has banned the sale of all non-approved brands of quinine. Do not purchase quinine on the Internet or from vendors outside of the United States.

Quinine is used to treat uncomplicated malaria, a disease caused by parasites. Parasites that cause malaria typically enter the body through the bite of a mosquito. Malaria is common in areas such as Africa, South America, and Southern Asia.

Quinine will not treat severe forms of malaria, and it **should not be taken to prevent malaria**.

Some people have used quinine to treat leg cramps, but this is not an FDA-approved use. **Using this medication improperly or without the advice of a doctor can result in serious side effects or death.**

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

Quinine side effects

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

Quinine may cause serious side effects. Call your doctor at once if you have:

- fever, chills, body aches, flu symptoms, sores in your mouth and throat;
- easy bruising, unusual bleeding (nose, mouth, vagina, or rectum), purple or red pinpoint spots under your skin;
- headache with chest pain and severe dizziness, fainting, fast or pounding heartbeats;
- sudden numbness or weakness (especially on one side of the body), sudden severe headache, slurred speech, problems with balance;
- chest pain, sudden cough, wheezing, rapid breathing, coughing up blood;

- problems with vision or hearing;
- pain, swelling, warmth, or redness in one or both legs;
- severe pain in your side or lower back, blood in your urine, little or no urine;
- [low blood sugar](#) (more common in pregnant women)--headache, hunger, weakness, sweating, confusion, irritability, dizziness, [fast heart rate](#), or feeling jittery;
- loss of appetite, dark urine, clay-colored stools, jaundice (yellowing of the skin or eyes); or
- severe skin reaction -- fever, sore throat, swelling in your face or tongue, burning in your eyes, skin pain, followed by a red or purple skin rash that spreads (especially in the face or upper body) and causes blistering and peeling.

Common side effects of quinine may include:

- headache, blurred vision, changes in color vision;
- sweating or flushing (warmth, redness, or tingly feeling);
- mild dizziness, spinning sensation, ringing in your ears; or
- upset stomach, vomiting, stomach pain.

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.

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

Related/similar drugs

Plaquenil

Plaquenil is used to treat or prevent malaria and to treat the symptoms of rheumatoid arthritis ...

Reviews & ratings

6.4 / 10

[158 Reviews](#)

[View more](#)

FEATURED

Repatha

Repatha (evolocumab) is a PCSK9 inhibitor used to lower high cholesterol alongside dietary changes ...

Reviews & ratings

5.3 / 10

[685 Reviews](#)

[View more](#)

Cleocin

Cleocin (clindamycin) is used to treat serious bacterial infections. Includes Cleocin side effects ...

Reviews & ratings

5.7 / 10

[17 Reviews](#)

[View more](#)

Malarone

Malarone (atovaquone and proguanil) is an antiprotozoal and antimalarial and is used to treat or ...

Reviews & ratings

5.5 / 10

[44 Reviews](#)

[View more](#)

Clindamycin

Clindamycin (Cleocin) is used to treat serious infections caused by bacteria. Includes clindamycin ...

Reviews & ratings

5.7 / 10

[806 Reviews](#)

[View more](#)

Hydroxychloroquine

Hydroxychloroquine is a quinoline drug used to treat or prevent malaria. It's also used to treat ...

Reviews & ratings

6.4 / 10

[356 Reviews](#)

[View more](#)

Warnings

Quinine can cause serious side effects on your heart, kidneys, or blood cells. Stop taking quinine and call your doctor at once if you have headache with chest pain and severe dizziness, fast or pounding heartbeats, unusual bruising or bleeding (nosebleeds, bleeding gums, purple or red spots under your skin), signs of infection (fever, chills, mouth sores), severe lower back pain, or blood in your urine.

You should not take quinine if you have a heart rhythm disorder called [Long QT syndrome](#), a genetic enzyme deficiency called glucose-6-phosphate dehydrogenase deficiency (G-6-PD), [myasthenia gravis](#), [optic neuritis](#) (inflammation of the nerves in your eyes), if you have taken quinine in the past and it caused a blood cell disorder or severe bleeding.

Some people have used quinine to treat leg cramps, but this is not an FDA-approved use. **Using this medication improperly or without the advice of a doctor can result in serious side effects or death.**

Before taking this medicine

You should not use this medication if you have ever had an allergic reaction to quinine or similar medicines such as mefloquine or quinidine, or if you have:

- a heart rhythm disorder called Long QT syndrome;
- an enzyme deficiency called glucose-6-phosphate dehydrogenase deficiency (G-6-PD);
- myasthenia gravis;
- optic neuritis (inflammation of the optic nerve); or
- if you have taken quinine in the past and it caused a blood cell disorder, severe bleeding, or kidney problems.

To make sure quinine is safe for you, tell your doctor if you have:

- heart disease or a heart rhythm disorder;
- low levels of platelets in your blood;
- low potassium levels in your blood (hypokalemia); or
- liver or kidney disease.

FDA [pregnancy category](#) C. It is not known whether quinine will harm an unborn baby. Tell your doctor if you are pregnant or plan to become pregnant while using this medication.

Quinine can pass into breast milk and may harm a nursing baby. Tell your doctor if you are breast-feeding a baby.

Do not give this medication to a child younger than 16 years old.

How should I take quinine?

Follow all directions on your prescription label. Do not take quinine in larger or smaller amounts or for longer than recommended.

Take with food if quinine upsets your stomach.

Take this medication for the full prescribed length of time. Your symptoms may get better before your condition is

completely cleared.

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

Call your doctor if your symptoms do not improve after 2 days of treatment, or if your symptoms return after you have finished the medicine.

Store at room temperature away from moisture and heat.

 [Detailed Quinine dosage information](#)

What happens if I miss a dose?

Take the missed dose as soon as you remember. If you are more than 4 hours late for your dose, skip the missed dose and take the medicine at your next scheduled dose time. **Do not** take 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.

What should I avoid while taking quinine?

Avoid taking other anti-malaria medications without your doctor's advice. This includes chloroquine, halofantrine, and mefloquine.

Avoid using antacids without your doctor's advice. Use only the type of antacid your doctor recommends. Some antacids can make it harder for your body to absorb quinine.

Quinine may cause blurred vision and may impair your thinking or reactions. Be careful if you drive or do anything that requires you to be alert and able to see clearly.

Do not use quinine to treat any condition that has not been checked by your doctor.

What other drugs will affect quinine?

Many drugs can interact with quinine. Not all possible interactions are listed here. Tell your doctor about all your medications and any you start or stop using during treatment with quinine, especially:

- [acetazolamide](#), [sodium bicarbonate](#);
- aminophylline, theophylline;
- [arsenic trioxide](#), vandetanib;
- bosentan;
- imatinib;
- methadone;
- tacrolimus;

- [St. John's wort](#);
- an antibiotic--azithromycin, [clarithromycin](#), erythromycin, levofloxacin, moxifloxacin, pentamidine, telithromycin, tetracycline;
- an antidepressant--[amitriptyline](#), citalopram, clomipramine, desipramine, nefazodone, venlafaxine;
- antifungal medication--itraconazole, ketoconazole, posaconazole, voriconazole;
- cholesterol-lowering medicine--atorvastatin, simvastatin, lovastatin;
- cough medicine that contains [dextromethorphan](#);
- heart medication--amiodarone, digoxin, dofetilide, disopyramide, dronedarone, flecainide, ibutilide, metoprolol, procainamide, propafenone, quinidine, sotalol, verapamil;
- hepatitis C medications--boceprevir, telaprevir;
- HIV/AIDS medication--atazanavir, delavirdine, efavirenz, [fosamprenavir](#), indinavir, nelfinavir, nevirapine, ritonavir, saquinavir;
- medicine to prevent or treat nausea and vomiting--dolasetron, droperidol, ondansetron;
- medicine to treat a psychiatric disorder--[chlorpromazine](#), clozapine, haloperidol, mesoridazine, pimozide, thioridazine, ziprasidone;
- seizure medication--[carbamazepine](#), fosphenytoin, [oxcarbazepine](#), phenobarbital, phenytoin, primidone;
- stomach acid reducers--cimetidine, ranitidine; or
- tuberculosis medication--rifabutin, rifampin, rifapentine.

This list is not complete and many other drugs can interact with quinine. This includes prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and [herbal products](#). Give a list of all your medicines to any healthcare provider who treats you.

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

Does quinine interact with my other drugs?

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

+

Add

More about quinine

- [Check interactions](#)
- [Compare alternatives](#)
- [Pricing & coupons](#)
- [Reviews \(20\)](#)

- [Drug images](#)
- [Side effects](#)
- [Dosage information](#)
- [During pregnancy](#)
- [Drug class: antimalarial quinolines](#)
- [Breastfeeding](#)
- [En español](#)

Patient resources

- [Quinine advanced reading](#)

Other brands

[Qualaquin](#)

Professional resources

- [QuiNINE monograph](#)
- [Quinine Sulfate Capsules \(FDA\)](#)

Other brands

[Qualaquin](#)

Related treatment guides

- [Nocturnal Leg Cramps](#)
- [Myotonia Congenita](#)
- [Malaria](#)

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.

[Medical Disclaimer](#)

Copyright 1996-2025 Cerner Multum, Inc. Version: 9.01.

DRUG STATUS

Availability

Rx Prescription only


Pregnancy & Lactation

 Risk data available

CSA Schedule*

N/A Not a controlled drug

Approval History

 Drug history at FDA



User Reviews & Ratings

8.4 / 10

[20 Reviews](#)

Images

[Quinine Sulfate 260 mg \(715 260 WATSON\)](#)



[View larger images](#)

Drugs.com Mobile App

Access drug & treatment information, identify pills, check interactions and set up personal medication records.



About

[About Drugs.com](#)

[Advertising policy](#)

[Attribution & citations](#)

Terms & privacy

[Terms of use](#)

[Editorial policy](#)

[Privacy policy](#)

Support

[Help center](#)

[Sitemap](#)

[Contact us](#)





[Subscribe to our newsletter](#) for the latest medication news, new drug approvals and FDA alerts.

Drugs.com provides accurate and independent information on more than 24,000 prescription drugs, over-the-counter medicines and natural products. This material is provided for educational purposes only and is not intended for medical advice, diagnosis or treatment. Data sources include Micromedex (updated 7 Apr 2025), Cerner Multum™ (updated 13 Apr 2025), ASHP (updated 10 Apr 2025) and others.



Ad Choices
ADVERTISEMENT



Copyright © 2000-2025 Drugs.com. All rights reserved.