

[Home](#)

## 2. Methylphenidate

# Methylphenidate

**Generic name:** methylphenidate (oral) [ *METH-il-FEN-i-date* ]**Brand names:** [Adhansia XR](#), [Aptensio XR](#), [Concerta](#), [Cotempla XR-ODT](#), [Jornay PM](#), ... [show all 12 brands](#)**Drug class:** [CNS stimulants](#)Medically reviewed by [Sophia Entringer, PharmD](#). Last updated on Jan 1, 2025.[Uses](#) [Warnings](#) [Before taking](#) [Dosage](#) [Side effects](#) [Interactions](#) [FAQ](#)

## What is methylphenidate?

[Methylphenidate](#) is a central nervous system stimulant. It affects chemicals in the brain and nerves that contribute to hyperactivity and impulse control.

Methylphenidate is used to treat attention deficit disorder (ADD), [attention deficit hyperactivity disorder \(ADHD\)](#), and [narcolepsy](#).

Methylphenidate should be used as a part of a total treatment program for ADHD that may include counseling or other therapies.

## Warnings

Methylphenidate may be habit-forming. **Misuse can cause addiction, overdose, or death. Tell your doctor if you have had problems with drug or alcohol abuse.**

**Stimulants have caused stroke, heart attack, and sudden death in people with high blood pressure, heart disease, or a heart defect.**

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

Methylphenidate may cause new or worsening psychosis (unusual thoughts or behavior), especially if you have a history of depression, mental illness, or [bipolar disorder](#).

You may have blood circulation problems that can cause numbness, pain, or discoloration in your fingers or toes.

Call your doctor right away if you have: **signs of heart problems** - chest pain, feeling light-headed or short of breath; **signs of psychosis** - paranoia, aggression, new behavior problems, seeing or hearing things that are not real; **signs of circulation problems** - unexplained wounds on your fingers or toes.

Tell your doctor if you have a history of drug or alcohol addiction. Keep the medication where others cannot get to it.

## Before taking this medicine

You should not use methylphenidate if you are allergic to it, or if you have:

- glaucoma;
- severe high blood pressure or a heart problem;
- overactive thyroid;
- a personal or family history of tics (muscle twitches) or [Tourette's syndrome](#); or
- severe [anxiety](#), tension, or [agitation](#) (stimulant medicine can make these symptoms worse).

**Stimulants have caused stroke, heart attack, and sudden death in certain people.** Tell your doctor if you have:

- heart problems or a congenital heart defect;
- [high blood pressure](#); or
- a family history of heart disease or sudden death.

Do not use methylphenidate if you have used an MAO inhibitor in the past 14 days. A dangerous drug interaction could occur. MAO inhibitors include [isocarboxazid](#), [linezolid](#), [methylene blue](#) injection, [phenelzine](#), and [tranylcypromine](#).

Tell your doctor if you also use opioid medicine, [herbal products](#), or medicine for depression, mental illness, [Parkinson's disease](#), [migraine](#) headaches, serious infections, or prevention of [nausea and vomiting](#). An interaction with methylphenidate could cause a serious condition called serotonin syndrome.

Tell your doctor if you or anyone in your family has ever had:

- depression, mental illness, bipolar disorder, psychosis, or suicidal thoughts or actions;
- blood circulation problems in the hands or feet;
- [alcoholism](#) or [drug addiction](#); or
- if you take Adhansia - an allergy to [aspirin](#) or yellow food dye.

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

- problems with the esophagus, stomach, or intestines; or
- [seizures](#), [epilepsy](#), or an abnormal brain wave test (EEG).

Becoming dependent on methylphenidate during pregnancy can cause premature birth or low birth weight. Tell your doctor if you are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. If you are pregnant, your name may be listed on a pregnancy registry to track the effects of methylphenidate on the baby.

Ask a doctor if it is safe to breastfeed while using this medicine. If you are breastfeeding, tell your doctor if you notice symptoms in the baby such as agitation, sleep problems, feeding problems, or reduced weight gain.

methylphenidate is not approved for use by anyone younger than 6 years old.

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

## How should I take methylphenidate?

Take methylphenidate exactly as prescribed by your doctor. Follow all directions on your prescription label and read all medication guides or instruction sheets. Your doctor may occasionally change your dose.

Methylphenidate may be habit-forming. **Misuse can cause addiction, overdose, or death.** Keep the medication where others cannot get to it. Selling or giving away this medicine is against the law.

Your dose needs may change if you switch to a different brand, strength, or form of this medicine. Avoid medication errors by using only the medicine your doctor prescribes.

Most brands of methylphenidate are taken 1 or 2 times during the day. Jornay PM is for use only at night between 6:30 and 9:30 pm.

You may take methylphenidate with or without food, but take it the same way each time.

Swallow the **extended-release** capsule or tablet whole and do not crush, chew, or break it.

If you cannot swallow an extended-release capsule whole, open it and mix the medicine with soft food such as applesauce, pudding or yogurt. Swallow the mixture right away without chewing.

You must chew the chewable tablet before you swallow it.

Measure liquid medicine with the supplied measuring device (not a kitchen spoon).

Allow the orally disintegrating tablet to dissolve in your mouth without chewing.

Tell your doctor if you have a planned surgery.

Your treatment may also include counseling or other treatments.

Your doctor will need to check your progress on a regular basis. Your heart and blood pressure may also need to be checked often.

Store tightly closed at room temperature, away from moisture, heat, and light. Keep your medicine in a place where no one can use it improperly.

Do not keep leftover medicine. Ask your pharmacist about a drug take-back program. You may also mix the leftover medicine with cat litter or coffee grounds in a sealed plastic bag and throw the bag in the trash.

 [Detailed Methylphenidate dosage information](#)

## What happens if I miss a dose?

Take the medicine as soon as you can, but skip the missed dose if it is almost time for your next dose. Do not take two doses at one time.

## What happens if I overdose?

Seek emergency medical attention or call the Poison Help line at 1-800-222-1222. **An overdose of methylphenidate could be fatal.**

Overdose symptoms may include [nausea](#), dry mouth, [vomiting](#), [diarrhea](#), anxiety, agitation, restlessness, tremor, muscle twitches, rapid breathing, confusion, hallucinations, dilated pupils, muscle pain or weakness, fever, sweating, [headache](#),

pounding in your neck or ears, fast or pounding heartbeats, feeling light-headed, fainting, seizure (convulsions), or coma.

## What should I avoid while taking methylphenidate?

**Avoid drinking alcohol.**

Avoid driving or hazardous activity until you know how methylphenidate will affect you. Your reactions could be impaired.

## Methylphenidate side effects

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

Call your doctor at once if you have:

- **signs of heart problems** - chest pain, trouble breathing, feeling like you might pass out;
- **signs of psychosis** - hallucinations (seeing or hearing things that are not real), new behavior problems, aggression, hostility, paranoia;
- **signs of circulation problems** - numbness, pain, cold feeling, unexplained wounds, or skin color changes (pale, red, or blue appearance) in your fingers or toes; or
- penis erection that is painful or lasts 4 hours or longer.

**Seek medical attention right away if you have symptoms of serotonin syndrome, such as:** agitation, hallucinations, fever, sweating, shivering, [fast heart rate](#), muscle stiffness, twitching, loss of coordination, nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea.

Methylphenidate can affect growth in children. Your child's height and weight may need to be checked often. Tell your doctor if your child is not growing at a normal rate.

Common methylphenidate side effects may include:

- sweating, increased blood pressure;
- mood changes, anxiety, feeling nervous or irritable, trouble sleeping;
- fast heart rate, pounding heartbeats or fluttering in your chest;
- loss of appetite, [weight loss](#);
- dry mouth, nausea, vomiting, stomach pain, [indigestion](#); or
- headache, [dizziness](#).

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.

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

## Related/similar drugs

## Lexapro

Lexapro is used to treat anxiety and major depressive disorder. Learn about side effects ...

### Reviews & ratings

7.6 / 10

[2,376 Reviews](#)

[View more](#)

## Zoloft

Zoloft is an antidepressant used to treat major depression, obsessive-compulsive disorder, panic ...

### Reviews & ratings

7.3 / 10

[1,972 Reviews](#)

[View more](#)

### FEATURED

## Xywav

Xywav is used for the treatment of cataplexy and excessive daytime sleepiness (EDS) in patients ...

### Reviews & ratings

8.1 / 10

[16 Reviews](#)

[View more](#)

## Seroquel

Seroquel is used to treat the symptoms of schizophrenia, bipolar disorder and major depressive ...

### Reviews & ratings

7.0 / 10

[694 Reviews](#)

[View more](#)

## Adderall

Adderall (amphetamine and dextroamphetamine) is used to treat

narcolepsy and ADHD. Includes side

...

### Reviews & ratings

7.2 / 10

[505 Reviews](#)

[View more](#)

## Prozac

Prozac (fluoxetine) is an SSRI antidepressant used to treat depression, OCD, panic disorder ...

### Reviews & ratings

7.2 / 10

[1,239 Reviews](#)

[View more](#)

## Cymbalta

Cymbalta (duloxetine) is used to treat major depressive disorder, general anxiety disorder and ...

### Reviews & ratings

6.3 / 10

[1,899 Reviews](#)

[View more](#)

## Citalopram

Citalopram is an antidepressant (selective serotonin reuptake inhibitor) and is used to treat ...

### Reviews & ratings

7.4 / 10

[2,231 Reviews](#)

[View more](#)

## Sertraline

Sertraline (Zoloft) is an SSRI used to treat depression, anxiety, OCD, PTSD, and PMDD by increasing ...

### Reviews & ratings

[View more](#)

### Wellbutrin

Wellbutrin (bupropion) is used to treat major depressive disorder and seasonal affective disorder ...

#### Reviews & ratings

6.8 / 10

756 Reviews

[View more](#)

## What other drugs will affect methylphenidate?

Tell your doctor about all your other medicines, especially:

- **a blood thinner** - warfarin, Coumadin, Jantoven;
- blood pressure medication;
- an antidepressant;
- seizure medication; or
- cold or allergy medications that contain decongestants.

This list is not complete. Other drugs may interact with methylphenidate, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, [vitamins](#), and [herbal products](#). Not all possible drug interactions are listed here.

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

## Does methylphenidate interact with my other drugs?

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

+

**Add**

## Popular FAQ

What is methylphenidate used for?



## More FAQ

- [Ritalin vs Vyvanse - What's the difference between them?](#)
- [Concerta vs Adderall - What's the difference between them?](#)
- [What are the brands of methylphenidate?](#)
- [Jornay PM vs other methylphenidate formulations - how do they compare?](#)
- [How is Cotempla XR-ODT different to other brands of methylphenidate?](#)

[View more FAQ...](#)

## More about methylphenidate

- [Check interactions](#)
- [Compare alternatives](#)
- [Pricing & coupons](#)
- [Reviews \(1,081\)](#)
- [Drug images](#)
- [Latest FDA alerts \(4\)](#)
- [Side effects](#)
- [Dosage information](#)
- [Patient tips](#)
- [During pregnancy](#)
- [Support group](#)
- [Drug class: CNS stimulants](#)
- [Breastfeeding](#)

## Patient resources

- [Methylphenidate Chewable Tablets patient information](#)
- [Methylphenidate Controlled-Release Tablets](#)
- [Methylphenidate Extended-Release Chewable Tablets](#)
- [Methylphenidate Extended-Release Capsules \(Evening Formulation\)](#)
- [Methylphenidate Extended-Release Oral Suspension](#)
- [Methylphenidate Transdermal System](#)

## Other brands



Concerta, Ritalin, Jornay PM, Daytrana, ... +8 more

Professional resources

- [Methylphenidate monograph](#)
- [Methylin Chewable Tablet \(FDA\)](#)
- [Methylphenidate CD Capsules \(FDA\)](#)
- [Methylphenidate Chewable Tablets \(FDA\)](#)
- [Methylphenidate ER Capsules \(FDA\)](#)

Other brands

Concerta, Ritalin, Jornay PM, Ritalin LA, ... +10 more

Related treatment guides

- [ADHD](#)
- [Narcolepsy](#)
- [Fatigue](#)
- [Depression](#)

Further information


Remember, keep this and all other medicines out of the reach of children, never share your medicines with others, and use methylphenidate 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: 23.02.

DRUG STATUS

Availability		
Rx	Prescription only	
Pregnancy & Lactation		
	Risk data available	
CSA Schedule*		
2	High potential for abuse	▼
Approval History		
	Drug history at FDA	▼
WADA Class		
	Anti-Doping Classification	▼

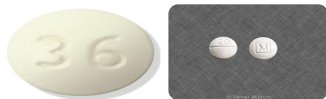
## User Reviews & Ratings

7.2 / 10

[1,081 Reviews](#)

## Images

[Methylphenidate Hydrochloride Extended-Release 36 mg \(36\)](#)



[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.