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2. HCG

# Human chorionic gonadotropin (HCG)

**Generic name:** [human chorionic gonadotropin \(HCG\) \(injectable\)](#) [ HYOO-man-cor-ee-ON-ik-go-NAD-o-TRO-pin ]

**Brand names:** Ovidrel, Pregnyl

**Drug class:** [Gonadotropins](#)

Medically reviewed by [Kaci Durbin, MD](#). Last updated on Apr 19, 2024.

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The HCG 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 HCG?

Human chorionic gonadotropin (HCG) is a hormone that supports the normal development of an egg in a woman's ovary, and stimulates the release of the egg during ovulation.

HCG is used to cause ovulation and to treat infertility in women, and to increase sperm count in men. HCG is also used in young boys when their testicles have not dropped down into the scrotum normally. This can be caused by a pituitary gland disorder.

HCG may also be used for other purposes not listed.

## Warnings

HCG is given as an injection under the skin or into a muscle. If you use HCG at home, your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist will give you specific instructions on how and where to inject this medicine. Do not self-inject HCG if you do not fully understand how to give the injection and properly dispose of used needles and syringes.

**HCG can place you at higher risk for a blood clot.** Call your doctor at once if you have any of these signs of a blood clot: pain, warmth, redness, numbness, or tingling in your arm or leg; confusion, extreme dizziness, or severe headache.

**Some women using this medicine have developed a condition called ovarian hyperstimulation syndrome (OHSS),** especially after the first treatment cycle. OHSS can be a life-threatening condition. Call your doctor right away if you have any symptoms of OHSS: severe pelvic pain, swelling of the hands or legs, stomach pain and swelling, shortness of breath, weight gain, diarrhea, nausea or vomiting, or if you are urinating less than normal.

**HCG can cause early puberty in young boys.** Call your doctor if a boy using this medicine shows early signs of puberty, such as a deepened voice, pubic hair growth, and increased acne or sweating.

**Using HCG can increase your chances of having a multiple pregnancy** (twins, triplets, quadruplets, etc). A multiple pregnancy is a high-risk pregnancy for the mother and for the babies. Follow your doctor's instructions about any special care you may need during your pregnancy.

Although HCG can help you become pregnant, it should not be used during pregnancy. Tell your doctor right away if you become pregnant during treatment.

HCG has no known effect on appetite, hunger, fat loss, or fat distribution. It is not approved by the FDA as a weight loss medication or for the treatment of obesity.

## Before using HCG

You should not use this medication if you have ever had an allergic reaction to HCG, or if you have:

- early puberty (also called precocious puberty);
- a hormone-related cancer (such as prostate cancer);
- cancer or a tumor of the breast, ovary, or uterus;
- certain types of ovarian cysts;
- uncontrolled thyroid or adrenal dysfunction;
- a cancer or tumor of the hypothalamus or pituitary gland in the brain;
- vaginal bleeding without a known cause; or
- if you are currently pregnant.

Before receiving HCG tell your doctor if you are allergic to any drugs or if you have:

- a thyroid or adrenal gland disorder;
- an ovarian cyst;
- unexplained vaginal bleeding;
- heart disease;
- kidney disease;
- epilepsy;
- migraines; or
- asthma.

If you have any of these conditions, you may need a dose adjustment or special tests to safely use HCG.

Although HCG can help you become pregnant, you should not use HCG if you are pregnant. Tell your doctor right away if you become pregnant during treatment. It is not known whether HCG passes into breast milk. Tell your doctor if you are breast-feeding a baby before using HCG.

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

## How should I use HCG?

Use HCG exactly as prescribed by your doctor. Do not use it in larger amounts or for longer than recommended. Follow the directions on your prescription label.

HCG is given as an injection under the skin or into a muscle. Your doctor, nurse, or other healthcare provider will give you this injection. You may be shown how to inject your medicine at home. Do not self-inject this medicine if you do not fully understand how to give the injection and properly dispose of used needles and syringes.

Use each disposable needle only one time. Throw away used needles in a puncture-proof container (ask your pharmacist where you can get one and how to dispose of it). Keep this container out of the reach of children and pets.

To be sure HCG is helping your condition, your doctor will need to check you on a regular basis. Do not miss any scheduled appointments.

Some brands of HCG come in powder form with a separate liquid that you must mix together and draw into a syringe. Other brands are provided in single-dose prefilled syringes.

Do not use the medication if it has changed colors or the liquid has any particles in it. Call your doctor for a new prescription. Store unmixed HCG at room temperature away from light, moisture, and heat. After mixing the HCG, you must keep it in the refrigerator until you are ready for your injection. Throw away any mixed medicine that you have not used within 30 days after mixing.

 [Detailed HCG dosage information](#)

## What happens if I miss a dose?

Contact your doctor if you miss a dose of HCG.

## What happens if I overdose?

Seek emergency medical attention if you think you have used too much of this medicine. An overdose of HCG is not expected to produce life-threatening symptoms.

## What should I avoid?

Follow your doctor's instructions about any restrictions on food, beverages, or activity while you are using HCG.

## HCG side effects

Stop using HCG and 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.

Call your doctor at once if you have any of these signs of a blood clot: pain, warmth, redness, numbness, or tingling in your arm or leg; confusion, extreme dizziness, or severe headache.

Some women using this medicine have developed a condition called ovarian hyperstimulation syndrome (OHSS), especially after the first treatment cycle. OHSS can be a life-threatening condition. Call your doctor right away if you have any of the following symptoms of OHSS:

- severe pelvic pain;
- swelling of the hands or legs;

- stomach pain and swelling;
- shortness of breath;
- weight gain;
- diarrhea;
- nausea or vomiting; or
- urinating less than normal.

HCG can cause early puberty in young boys. Call your doctor if a boy using this medicine shows early signs of puberty, such as a deepened voice, pubic hair growth, and increased acne or sweating.

Less serious side effects from HCG may include:

- headache;
- feeling restless or irritable;
- mild swelling or water weight gain;
- depression;
- feeling tired;
- breast tenderness or swelling; or
- pain, swelling, or irritation where the injection is given.

This is not a complete list of side effects and others may occur. Tell your doctor about any unusual or bothersome side effect. You may report side effects to FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.

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

## Related/similar drugs

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## What other drugs will affect HCG?

There may be other drugs that can interact with HCG. Tell your doctor about all the prescription and over-the-counter medications you use. This includes vitamins, minerals, herbal products, and drugs prescribed by other doctors. Do not start using a new medication without telling your doctor.

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

## Does HCG interact with my other drugs?

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

HCG

+

Enter a drug name

Add

## Hcg Biosimilars

Biosimilar and interchangeable products are biological products that are highly similar to and have no clinically meaningful differences from the reference product.

## Reference products

These are biological products that have already been approved by the FDA, against which biosimilar products are compared. There are 5 for HCG.

### A.P.L. (chorionic gonadotropin) - Ferring Pharmaceuticals Inc.

Formulation type	Strength
Single-Dose Vial	10,000 units <b>Discontinued</b>
Single-Dose Vial	20,000 units <b>Discontinued</b>
Single-Dose Vial	5,000 units <b>Discontinued</b>

View [A.P.L.](#) information in detail.

### Chorionic Gonadotropin (chorionic gonadotropin) - Bel-Mar Laboratories, Inc.

### Novarel (chorionic gonadotropin) - Ferring Pharmaceuticals Inc.

### Ovidrel (choriogonadotropin alfa) - EMD Serono, Inc.

## References

1. [Hcg Product Label](#)

## More about HCG (chorionic gonadotropin (hcg))

- [Check interactions](#)
- [Compare alternatives](#)
- [Reviews \(13\)](#)
- [Side effects](#)
- [Dosage information](#)
- [During pregnancy](#)
- [Drug class: gonadotropins](#)

## Patient resources

### Other brands

[Pregnyl](#), [Ovidrel](#), [Novarel](#), [Chorex](#), [Profasi](#)

## Professional resources

- [Gonadotropin, Chorionic monograph](#)
- [Chorionic Gonadotropin \(FDA\)](#)

### Other brands

[Pregnyl](#), [Ovidrel](#), [Novarel](#)

## Related treatment guides

- [Hypogonadism, Male](#)
- [Weight Loss \(Obesity/Overweight\)](#)
- [Ovulation Induction](#)
- [Prepubertal Cryptorchidism](#)
- [Female Infertility](#)

## Further information

Remember, keep this and all other medicines out of the reach of children, never share your medicines with others, and use HCG 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](#)

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DRUG STATUS

<b>Availability</b>	
	Discontinued
<b>Pregnancy &amp; Lactation</b>	
	Risk data available
<b>CSA Schedule*</b>	
N/A	Not a controlled drug
<b>WADA Class</b>	
	Anti-Doping Classification

User Reviews & Ratings

7.2 / 10

[13 Reviews](#)

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