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2. Acetaminophen

# Acetaminophen

**Pronunciation:** *a-SEET-a-MIN-oh-fen*

**Generic name:** acetaminophen (oral)

**Brand names:** [Actamin](#), Anacin AF, [Aurophen](#), Bromo Seltzer, [Children's Tylenol](#), ... [show all 14 brands](#)

**Dosage forms:** oral capsule (325 mg; 500 mg), oral granule, effervescent (650 mg), oral liquid (160 mg/5 mL; 325 mg/10.15 mL; 500 mg/15 mL; 650 mg/20.3 mL), ... [show all 9 dosage forms](#)

**Drug class:** [Miscellaneous analgesics](#)

Medically reviewed by [Kaci Durbin, MD](#). Last updated on Aug 6, 2023.

[Uses](#)   [Side effects](#)   [Before taking](#)   [Dosage](#)   [Warnings](#)   [Interactions](#)   [FAQ](#)

## What is acetaminophen?

Acetaminophen is a [pain reliever](#) and a fever reducer.

Acetaminophen is used to treat mild to moderate pain, moderate to severe pain in conjunction with opiates, or to reduce fever. Common conditions treated include headache, muscle aches, [arthritis](#), backache, toothaches, sore throat, colds, flu, and [fevers](#).

Acetaminophen is also available in many over-the-counter combination medications with other drugs, including Actifed, Alka-Seltzer Plus Liquid Gels, Cepacol, Contac, Coridicin, Dayquil, Dimetapp, Dristan, Excedrin, Feverall, Liquiprin, Midol, Nyquil, Panadol, Robitussin Singlet, Sinutab, Sudafed, Theraflu, Triaminic, Vanquish, Vicks, and Zicam.

Acetaminophen is also found in many prescription combination drugs, including Butalbital, Endocet, Fioricet, Hycotab, Hydrocet, Hydrocodone bitartrate, Lortab, Percocet, Phenaphen, Sedapap, Tapanol, Tylenol with codeine, Tylox, Ultracet, Vicodin, and Zydone.

Acetaminophen is typically used orally, but can be given intravenously.

## Acetaminophen side effects

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

**In rare cases, acetaminophen may cause a severe skin reaction that can be fatal**, even if you took acetaminophen in the past and had no reaction. **Stop taking this medicine and call your doctor right away if you have skin redness or a rash that spreads and causes blistering and peeling.**

**Stop taking acetaminophen and call your doctor at once if you have signs of liver problems:**

- stomach pain (upper right side);

- loss of appetite;
- tiredness, itching;
- dark urine, clay-colored stools; or
- jaundice (yellowing of the skin or eyes).

Less serious acetaminophen side effects may be more likely, and you may have none at all.

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.

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

## Related/similar drugs

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Paracetamol (Panadol, Calpol, Alvedon) is a widely used over-the-counter painkiller and fever ...

#### Reviews & ratings

6.1 / 10

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### Tylenol

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#### Reviews & ratings

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#### Reviews & ratings

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## Methylprednisolone

Methylprednisolone is used to treat conditions such as allergies, arthritis, lupus and ulcerative ...

### Reviews & ratings

7.1 / 10

[484 Reviews](#)

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## Diclofenac

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### Reviews & ratings

7.3 / 10

[695 Reviews](#)

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Oxycodone is an opioid analgesic used to treat moderate to severe pain; it has a high potential for ...

### Reviews & ratings

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[1,142 Reviews](#)

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## Cymbalta

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

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## Propranolol

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Tramadol is an opioid medication that may be used to treat moderate to moderately severe chronic ...

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Amitriptyline is a tricyclic antidepressant used to treat depression and, off-label, conditions ...

### Reviews & ratings

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## Before taking this medicine

You should not take acetaminophen if you are allergic to it, or if you take other medications that contain acetaminophen.

Ask a doctor or pharmacist if this medicine is safe to use if you've ever had [cirrhosis](#) of the liver, or if you drink alcohol daily.

**Ask a doctor before using this medicine if you are pregnant or breastfeeding.**

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

## How should I take acetaminophen?

Take acetaminophen exactly as directed on the label, or as prescribed by your doctor. **An overdose can damage your**

**liver or cause death.**

Acetaminophen comes in many different forms such as capsules, liquid, chewable or disintegrating tablets, and dissolving powders or granules. Read and carefully follow any Instructions for Use provided with your medicine. Ask your doctor or pharmacist if you need help.

- Adults and teenagers at least 12 years old: Do not take more than 1000 milligrams (mg) at one time or more than 4000 mg in 24 hours.
- Children younger than 12 years old: Do not take more than 5 doses of children's formula acetaminophen in 24 hours.

Do not give **extra-strength acetaminophen** to a child younger than 12 years old without medical advice.

A child's dose is based on age and weight. **Carefully follow the dosing instructions provided with acetaminophen.** Ask a doctor before giving this medicine to a child younger than 2 years.

Acetaminophen made for infants comes with its own medicine dropper or oral syringe. Measuring with the wrong device may cause an overdose. **Use only the provided dosing device provided to measure an infant's dose.**

Liquid acetaminophen made for infants comes with its own medicine dropper or oral syringe. Measuring with the wrong device may cause an overdose. **Use only the provided dosing device provided to measure an infant's dose.**

Acetaminophen made for infants is available in two different dose concentrations, and each concentration comes with its own medicine dropper or oral syringe. These dosing devices are not equal between the different concentrations. Using the wrong device may cause you to give your child an overdose of acetaminophen. Never mix and match dosing devices between infant formulations of acetaminophen.

You may need to shake the liquid before each use. Follow the directions on the medicine label.

The chewable tablet must be chewed thoroughly before you swallow it.

Make sure your hands are dry when handling the acetaminophen disintegrating tablet. Place the tablet on your tongue. It will begin to dissolve right away. Do not swallow the tablet whole. Allow it to dissolve in your mouth without chewing.

To use the acetaminophen effervescent granules, dissolve one packet of the granules in at least 4 ounces of water. Stir this mixture and drink all of it right away. To make sure you get the entire dose, add a little more water to the same glass, swirl gently and drink right away.

The oral powder should be placed directly on the tongue and swallowed.

Stop taking this medicine and call your doctor if:

- you still have a [sore throat](#) after 2 days of use;
- you still have a fever after 3 days of use;
- you still have pain after 7 days of use (or 5 days if treating a child);
- you have a [skin rash](#), ongoing headache, [nausea](#), [vomiting](#), redness or swelling; or
- your symptoms get worse, or if you have any new symptoms.

Taking acetaminophen may cause false results with certain blood glucose monitors. If you have diabetes, ask your doctor about the best way to monitor your blood sugar levels while using this medicine.

Store at room temperature away from heat and moisture.

 [Detailed Acetaminophen dosage information](#)

## What happens if I miss a dose?

Since acetaminophen 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 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. An overdose of acetaminophen can be fatal.

The first signs of an acetaminophen overdose include loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting, stomach pain, sweating, and confusion or weakness. Later symptoms may include pain in your upper stomach, dark urine, and yellowing of your skin or the whites of your eyes.

## What should I avoid while taking acetaminophen?

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.

Avoid using other medicines that may contain acetaminophen.

Avoid drinking alcohol.

## Warnings

You should not use this medication if you have severe liver disease.

**An overdose of acetaminophen can damage your liver or cause death.**

- **Adults and teenagers who weigh at least 110 pounds** should not take more than 1000 milligrams (mg) at one time, or more than 4000 mg in 24 hours.
- **Children younger than 12 years old** should not take more than 5 doses in 24 hours, using only the number of milligrams per dose that is recommended for the child's weight and age. **Use exactly as directed on the label.**

Avoid also using other medicines that contain acetaminophen (sometimes abbreviated as APAP), or **you could have a fatal overdose.**

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 this medicine and call your doctor right away if you have skin redness or a rash that spreads and causes blistering and peeling.**

## What other drugs will affect acetaminophen?

Other drugs may interact with acetaminophen, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, [vitamins](#), and [herbal products](#). Tell your doctor about all other medicines you use.

**i** [Acetaminophen drug interactions](#) (more detail)








## Does acetaminophen interact with my other drugs?

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

+

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- What temperature is considered a fever? 
- Is it safe to take acetaminophen every day? 

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## Patient resources

- [Acetaminophen \(Intravenous\) advanced reading](#)
- [Acetaminophen \(Oral, Rectal\) \(Advanced Reading\)](#)

## Other brands

[Paracetamol](#), [Tylenol](#), [Tylenol Arthritis Pain](#), [Ofirmev](#), ... +26 more

## Professional resources

- [Acetaminophen monograph](#)
- [Acetaminophen Injection \(FDA\)](#)

## Other brands

[Tylenol Arthritis Pain](#), [Ofirmev](#), [Children's Tylenol](#), [7T Gummy ES Chewable Tablets](#)

## Related treatment guides

- [Chronic Pain](#)
- [Back Pain](#)
- [Chiari Malformation](#)
- [Headache](#)

## Further information

Remember, keep this and all other medicines out of the reach of children, never share your medicines with others, and use acetaminophen 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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## Tylenol Pediatric Dosage Guide

Use these dosage charts for infants and children under 12 years old:  
[Tylenol Dosage Charts \(Infants & Children\)](#)

### DRUG STATUS

<b>Availability</b>		
	Rx and/or OTC	
<b>Pregnancy &amp; Lactation</b>		
	Risk data available	
<b>CSA Schedule*</b>		
<b>N/A</b>	Not a controlled drug	▼
<b>Approval History</b>		
	Drug history at FDA	▼

### User Reviews & Ratings

6.1 / 10

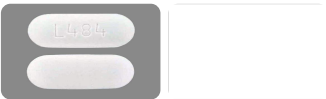
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