

Pharmacy Department

Chloral Hydrate 500 mg in 5ml oral mixture. Information for parents and carers

What is Chloral Hydrate used for?

Chloral Hydrate is part of a group of medicines called hypnotics (sleep inducing drugs). It can be used for the short term treatment of insomnia (sleeping problems) which is interfering with normal daily life.

In some cases, it may be used for long term treatment of sleep disorders, dystonias (abnormal movement), or as a rescue medicine for seizures or acute dystonic attacks. It is normally used only under the supervision of a medical specialist.

When should I give Chloral Hydrate and how much should I give?

Your doctor will work out the amount of Chloral Hydrate (the dose) that is right for your child. The dose and frequency (how often it is to be given) will be shown on the medicine label.

How should I give it?

Measure out the right amount using a medicine spoon or oral syringe. Oral syringes provided by Alder Hey will be marked for you. Do not use a kitchen teaspoon as it will not give the right amount.

The measured dose should be mixed with a small amount of water before it is given, as this will reduce the risk of stomach irritation.

How long will it take to start working?

Chloral Hydrate should start working within 30 minutes of a dose being given.

What if my child is sick (vomits)?

If your child is sick less than 30 minutes after having a dose of Chloral Hydrate, wait to see if there is an effect. If there has been no effect after 30 minutes, contact your doctor. **Do not** give another dose without first contacting a healthcare professional

What if I forget to give my child's regular dose of Chloral Hydrate?

If you remember up to one hour after you should have given a regular dose, you may give your child the missed dose. If you remember after that time, and are concerned, contact your doctor. Never give a 'double' dose of Chloral Hydrate

What if I give too much?

If you think you have given your child too much Chloral Hydrate, contact your doctor.

Speak to your doctor before taking Chloral Hydrate if your child:

- is suffering from gastritis (stomach problems),
- has severe heart problems,
- has severe liver or kidney problems,
- suffers from porphyria (an inherited blood disorder).

Can I give any other medicines with Chloral Hydrate?

Tell your doctor/pharmacist if your child is taking any other medication including over the counter medicines.

- You can give your child medicines that contain paracetamol or ibuprofen, unless your doctor has told you not to.

It is important to tell your doctor if your child is taking any of the following:

- Medicines to thin your child's blood (such as Warfarin).
- Medicines for depression or nervous disorders.
- Medicines intended to reduce muscle spasms.

Are there any side effects?

Like all medicines, chloral hydrate can cause side effects, although not everybody gets them. Some reported side effects of chloral hydrate are:

- Stomach irritation.
- Confusion.
- Sedation (Sleepiness).
- Gut swelling.
- Wind.
- Excitement
- Allergic skin reactions.
- Headache.
- Lack of co-ordination (ataxia).
- Ketonuria (a condition in which ketone bodies are present in the urine) which can only be detected by tests arranged by your doctor.

Where should I keep this medicine?

- Keep the medicine in a cupboard at room temperature (not above 25°C), away from heat and direct sunlight. It does not need to be kept in the fridge.
- Once the bottle has been opened, it must be discarded after 4 weeks (this date should be marked on the bottle).
- Keep out of reach and sight of children.

General advice about medicines

- Only give this medicine to your child. Never give it to anyone else, even if their condition appears to be the same, as this could do harm.
- If you think someone else may have taken the medicine by accident, contact your doctor straight away.

- Make sure that you always have enough medicine. Order a new prescription at least 2 weeks before you will run out.
- Make sure that the medicine you have at home has not reached the 'best before' or 'use by' date on the packaging. Give old medicines to your pharmacist to dispose of.
- This leaflet should be read with any manufacturers' patient information. You must always discuss individual treatment with the appropriate member of staff.

How do I get further supplies of Chloral Hydrate?

Chloral Hydrate oral mixture is available from Alder Hey pharmacy. Your chemist may be able to obtain this medicine if requested in advance, the following information may be useful to them:

Chloral hydrate is available as:

Chloral Hydrate 500mg in 5ml oral mixture manufactured by:
Preston Pharmaceuticals
Royal Preston Hospital
PR2 9HT
Tel: 01772710316

This leaflet only gives general information. You must always discuss the individual treatment of your child with the appropriate member of staff. Do not rely on this leaflet alone for information about your child's treatment. This information can be made available in other languages and formats if requested.

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