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## Compazine

Generic Name: prochlorperazine (oral) (pro klor PER a zeen)

Brand Names: *Compazine*

### What is oral prochlorperazine?

Prochlorperazine is an anti-psychotic medication in a group of drugs called phenothiazines (FEEN-oh-THYE-a-zeens). It works by changing the actions of chemicals in your brain.

Prochlorperazine is used to treat psychotic disorders such as schizophrenia. It is also used to treat anxiety, and to control severe [nausea and vomiting](#).

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

### What is the most important information I should know about oral prochlorperazine?

Stop using this medication and call your doctor at once if you have twitching or uncontrollable movements of your eyes, lips, tongue, face, arms, or legs. These could be early signs of dangerous side effects. Prochlorperazine is not for use in psychotic conditions related to dementia. Prochlorperazine may cause heart failure, sudden death, or pneumonia in older adults with dementia-related conditions. Do not use prochlorperazine if you have brain damage, bone marrow depression, or are also using large amounts of alcohol or medicines that make you sleepy. Do not use if you are allergic to prochlorperazine or other phenothiazines.

Before you take prochlorperazine, tell your doctor if you have glaucoma, heart disease or high blood pressure, liver or kidney disease, severe [asthma](#) or breathing problems, a history of seizures, adrenal gland tumor, Parkinson's disease, enlarged prostate or urination problems, an infectious disease (such as chickenpox, measles, flu, or central nervous system infection), past or present breast cancer, low levels of calcium in your blood, or if you have ever had a serious side effect while using prochlorperazine or similar medicines.

Before taking prochlorperazine, tell your doctor about all other medications you use.

### What should I discuss with my healthcare provider before taking oral prochlorperazine?

Prochlorperazine is not for use in psychotic conditions related to dementia. Prochlorperazine may cause heart failure, sudden death, or pneumonia in older adults with dementia-related conditions. Do not use prochlorperazine if you have brain damage, bone marrow depression, or are also using large amounts of alcohol or medicines that make you sleepy. Do not use if you are allergic to prochlorperazine or other phenothiazines such as chlorpromazine (Thorazine), fluphenazine (Permitil), perphenazine (Trilafon), promethazine (Adgan, Pentazine, Phenergan), thioridazine (Mellaril), or trifluoperazine (Stelazine).



If you have certain conditions, you may need a dose adjustment or special tests to safely use this medication. Before you take prochlorperazine, tell your doctor if you have:

- glaucoma;
- heart disease or high blood pressure;
- liver or kidney disease;
- severe asthma, [emphysema](#), or other breathing problem;
- a history of seizures;
- adrenal gland tumor (pheochromocytoma);
- [Parkinson's disease](#);
- an enlarged prostate or [urination problems](#);
- an infectious disease such as chickenpox, measles, stomach flu, or an infection of the central nervous system;
- past or present breast cancer;
- low levels of calcium in your blood (hypocalcemia); or
- if you have ever had a serious side effect while using prochlorperazine or another phenothiazine.

Tell your doctor if you will be exposed to extreme heat or cold, or to insecticide poisons while you are taking prochlorperazine.

It is not known whether prochlorperazine will harm an unborn baby. Prochlorperazine may cause side effects in a newborn if the mother takes the medication during pregnancy. Do not take this medication without first talking to your doctor if you are pregnant. Tell your doctor if you become pregnant while taking prochlorperazine. Prochlorperazine can pass into breast milk and may harm a nursing baby. Do not use this medication without telling your doctor if you are breast-feeding a baby. Older adults may be more likely to have side effects from this medication. Prochlorperazine is not for use in children younger than 2 years old or weighing less than 20 pounds. Talk with your doctor before giving this medication to a child who has been ill with a fever or flu symptoms.

## How should I take oral prochlorperazine?

Take this medication exactly as prescribed by your doctor. Do not take it in larger amounts or for longer than recommended. Follow the directions on your prescription label. Your doctor may occasionally change your dose to make sure you get the best results from this medication.

This medication can cause you to have unusual results with certain medical tests. Tell any doctor who treats you that you are using prochlorperazine.

If you need to have an x-ray or CT scan of your spinal column using a dye that is injected into a vein, you may need to temporarily stop taking prochlorperazine. Be sure the doctor knows ahead of time that you are using this medication.

Do not stop using prochlorperazine suddenly after long-term use, or you could have unpleasant withdrawal symptoms such as nausea, vomiting, dizziness, or feeling shaky. Talk to your doctor about how to avoid withdrawal symptoms when you stop using prochlorperazine.

Store prochlorperazine at room temperature away from moisture, heat, and light.

**See also:** Compazine dosage in more detail

## What happens if I miss a dose?

Take the missed dose as soon as you remember. If it is almost time for your next dose, wait until then to take the medicine and skip the missed dose. Do not take extra medicine to make up the missed dose.

## What happens if I overdose?

Seek emergency medical attention if you think you have used too much of this medicine. Overdose symptoms may include dry mouth, constipation, bloating or stomach cramps, extreme drowsiness or feeling restless and agitated, changes in heart rate, fever, and fainting.

## What should I avoid while taking oral prochlorperazine?

Prochlorperazine can cause side effects that may impair your thinking or reactions. Be careful if you drive or do anything that requires you to be awake and alert. Avoid getting up too fast from a sitting or lying position, or you may feel dizzy. Get up slowly and steady yourself to prevent a fall. Avoid drinking alcohol. It can increase some of the side effects of prochlorperazine. Avoid exposure to sunlight or tanning beds. Prochlorperazine can make your skin more sensitive to sunlight, and a sunburn may result. Wear sunscreen (SPF 15 or higher) and protective clothing if you must be outdoors.

## Oral prochlorperazine 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. Stop using prochlorperazine and call your doctor at once if you have a serious side effect such as:

- twitching or uncontrollable movements of your eyes, lips, tongue, face, arms, or legs;
- tremor (uncontrolled shaking), drooling, trouble swallowing, problems with balance or walking;
- feeling restless, jittery, or agitated;
- high fever, stiff muscles, confusion, sweating, fast or uneven heartbeats, rapid breathing;
- feeling like you might pass out;
- seizure (black-out or convulsions);
- decreased night vision, tunnel vision, watery eyes, increased sensitivity to light;
- nausea and stomach pain, skin rash, and jaundice (yellowing of the skin or eyes);
- pale skin, easy bruising or bleeding, fever, sore throat, flu symptoms;
- urinating less than usual or not at all;
- joint pain or swelling with fever, swollen glands, muscle aches, [chest pain](#), vomiting, unusual thoughts or behavior, and patchy skin color; or
- slow heart rate, weak pulse, fainting, slow breathing (breathing may stop).

Less serious side effects may include:

- dizziness, drowsiness, anxiety;

- sleep problems (insomnia), strange dreams;
- dry mouth, stuffy nose;
- blurred vision;
- constipation;
- breast swelling or discharge;
- a missed menstrual period;
- weight gain, swelling in your hands or feet;
- impotence, trouble having an orgasm;
- mild itching or skin rash; or
- headache.

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.

### **What other drugs will affect oral prochlorperazine?**

Cold or allergy medicine, sedatives, narcotic pain medicine, sleeping pills, muscle relaxers, and medicine for seizures, depression or anxiety can interact with prochlorperazine and cause medical problems or increase side effects. Tell your doctor if you regularly use any of these medicines, or any other anti-psychotic medications.

Also tell your doctor if you are taking any of the following medicines:

- atropine (Atreza, Sal-Tropine);
- lithium (Eskalith, Lithobid);
- a diuretic (water pill);
- an antibiotic;
- birth control pills or hormone replacement estrogens;
- blood pressure medication;
- a blood thinner such as warfarin (Coumadin);
- certain asthma medications or bronchodilators;
- drugs to treat a prostate disorder, such as alfuzosin (Uroxatral), doxazosin (Cardura), prazosin (Minipress), terazosin (Hytrin), tamsulosin (Flomax);
- incontinence medications;
- insulin or diabetes medications you take by mouth;
- medication for nausea, vomiting, or motion sickness;
- medications to treat or prevent malaria;
- medications used for general anesthesia;

- medicines used to prevent organ transplant rejection;
- numbing medicine such as lidocaine or Novocain;
- a stimulant or ADHD medication;
- ulcer or irritable bowel medications; or
- medicines to treat Parkinson's disease, restless leg syndrome, or pituitary gland tumor (prolactinoma).

This list is not complete and there are many other medicines that can interact with prochlorperazine. Tell your doctor about all your prescription and over-the-counter medications, vitamins, minerals, herbal products, and drugs prescribed by other doctors. Do not start a new medication without telling your doctor. Keep a list with you of all the medicines you use and show this list to any doctor or other healthcare provider who treats you.

### Where can I get more information?

- Your pharmacist can provide more information about oral prochlorperazine.
- 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.
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- Compazine Prescribing Information (FDA)
- Compazine MedFacts Consumer Leaflet (Wolters Kluwer)
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- Prochlorperazine Detailed Consumer Information (PDR)
- Prochlorperazine Professional Patient Advice (Wolters Kluwer)
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## Compare Compazine with other medications for the treatment of:

Anxiety  
Hiccups  
Nausea/Vomiting  
Psychosis