

# DrugFAQs

## Levaquin

*Generic name: Levofloxacin*

*Brand names: Levaquin*

### Why is Levaquin prescribed?

Levaquin cures a variety of bacterial infections, including several types of sinus infection and pneumonia. It is also prescribed for flare-ups of chronic bronchitis, acute kidney infections, certain urinary or chronic prostate infections, and [skin](#) infections. Levaquin is a member of the quinolone family of antibiotics.

### Most important fact about Levaquin

---

Levaquin has been known to cause dangerous allergic reactions as soon as you take the first dose. Stop taking the drug and call your doctor immediately if you develop any of the following warning signs:

- Skin rash, hives, or any other skin reaction
- Rapid heartbeat
- Difficulty swallowing or breathing
- Swelling of the face, lips, tongue, or throat

### How should you take Levaquin?

---

Take your complete prescription exactly as directed, even if you begin to feel better. If you stop taking Levaquin too soon, the infection may come back. You may take Levaquin at mealtimes or in-between, but you should avoid taking it within 2 hours of the following:

- Aluminum or magnesium antacids such as Maalox, Mylanta, or Gaviscon
- Iron supplements such as Ferro-Sequels or Feosol
- Any multivitamin preparation containing zinc
- Videx chewable tablets or pediatric powder
- The ulcer medication Carafate

Be sure to drink plenty of fluid while taking Levaquin.

--*If you miss a dose...* Take it as soon as you remember. If it is almost time for your next dose, skip the one you missed and go back to your regular schedule. Do not take 2 doses at once.

--*Storage instructions...*Store at room temperature. Keep container tightly closed.

### What side effects may occur?

---

Side effects cannot be anticipated. If any develop or change in intensity, tell your doctor as soon as possible. Only your doctor can determine if it is safe for you to continue taking Levaquin.

- *More common side effects may include:*  
Headache, nausea, constipation, diarrhea, difficulty sleeping
- *Less common or rare side effects may include:*  
Abdominal pain, abnormal dreams, abnormal or double vision, aggressiveness, agitation, anemia, angina, anxiety, asthma, back pain, blood abnormalities, blood clots, changeable emotions, chest pain, circulatory failure, colitis, coma, confusion, depression, difficulty in or obstructed breathing, difficulty concentrating, disorientation, dizziness, emotional or mental problems, exaggerated sense of well-being, fainting, fungal infection, gangrene or other infections, gas, genital infection and itching, hallucination, heart attack, heart failure, heartbeat irregularities, high or low blood pressure, high or low blood sugar, hives, impaired thinking, indigestion, intestinal bleeding, intestinal inflammation or blockage, irregular heartbeat, itching, kidney disorders, lack of muscle coordination, liver disorders, lung problems or inflammation, muscle pain weakness, pancreatitis, paralysis, pneumonia, rapid or slow heartbeat, rash, seizures, swelling of face or extremities, swollen tongue, tendon inflammation, tumor, vaginal inflammation, vertigo, vomiting, yellowing of eyes and skin

This side effects list is not complete. If you have any questions about side effects you should consult your doctor. Report any new or continuing symptoms to your doctor right away.

## Why should Levaquin not be prescribed?

---

If any other quinolone antibiotic--such as Cipro, Floxin, Maxaquin, Noroxin, or Penetrex--has ever given you an allergic reaction, avoid Levaquin.

## Special warnings about Levaquin

---

In rare cases, Levaquin has caused convulsions and other nervous disorders. If you develop any warning signs of a nervous reaction--ranging from restlessness and tremors to depression and hallucinations--stop taking Levaquin and call your doctor. Levaquin may cause dizziness or light-headedness. Do not drive or operate machinery until you know how Levaquin affects you. Hypersensitivity to quinolone antibiotics can, in rare instances, lead to severe illnesses ranging from blood disorders to liver or kidney failure. The first sign of a developing problem is often a rash; so you should stop taking Levaquin and check with your doctor when any type of skin disorder appears. Remember, too, that an immediate allergic reaction is also a possibility. A case of diarrhea during Levaquin therapy could signal development of the potentially dangerous condition known as pseudomembranous colitis, an inflammation of the bowel. Call your doctor for treatment at the first sign of a problem. Stop taking Levaquin, avoid exercise, and call your doctor if you develop pain, inflammation, or a rupture in a tendon. Quinolone antibiotics have been known to cause tendon rupture during and after therapy. The danger of this is greater when quinolones are combined with steroid medications, especially among older adults. In rare cases, Levaquin has been known to cause heartbeat irregularities. Avoid Levaquin if you are taking other medications that can change the heartbeat, or if you have a condition that predisposes you to this problem, such as a weak heart, a slow heartbeat, or low potassium. If you have a kidney condition, make sure the doctor is aware of it. Your dosage may need to be lowered.

## Possible food and drug interactions when taking Levaquin

---

Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs such as Advil, Motrin, and Naprosyn can increase the risk of a nervous reaction to Levaquin. Also, check with your doctor before combining Levaquin with an oral diabetes drug such as Glucotrol, Micronase, or Orinase; changes in blood sugar levels could result.

If you are taking the asthma drug, theophylline, or the blood-thinning drug, Coumadin, make sure the doctor is aware of it. Other quinolone antibiotics have been known to interact with these medications.

### Special information if you are pregnant or breastfeeding

---

The possibility that Levaquin might harm a developing baby has not been ruled out. It should be used during pregnancy only if the potential benefit outweighs the possible risk. If you are pregnant or plan to become pregnant, inform your doctor immediately. Levaquin is likely to appear in breast milk and could harm a nursing infant. If the drug is essential to your health, your doctor may advise you to stop nursing until your treatment is finished.

### Recommended dosage

---

#### ADULTS

*Respiratory and uncomplicated skin infections, and chronic prostate infections*

The usual dose is 500 milligrams once a day. For certain types of pneumonia, the dose is 750 milligrams once a day. Treatment of respiratory infections typically lasts 5 to 14 days; for uncomplicated skin infections, expect 7 to 10 days of treatment; for chronic prostate infections, treatment lasts for 28 days.

*Complicated skin infections*

The usual dose is 750 milligrams once a day. Treatment typically lasts for 7 to 14 days.

*Kidney and urinary infections*

The usual dose is 250 milligrams once a day. Treatment lasts 3 to 10 days.

#### CHILDREN

Not for children under 18. Levaquin might damage developing bones and joints.

### Overdosage

---

Levaquin is not especially poisonous. However, an overdose could still be dangerous. If you suspect one, seek emergency treatment immediately.

- *Symptoms of Levaquin overdose may include:*  
Breathlessness, lack of movement, poor coordination, tremors,  
convulsions, collapse