

Clonazepam

Your child needs to take the medicine called clonazepam (say: kloe-NA-ze-pam). This information sheet explains what clonazepam does, how to give it, and what side effects or problems your child may have when he or she takes this medicine.

What is clonazepam?

Clonazepam is a medicine called an anticonvulsant. It is used to control and prevent certain types of seizures. It may also be used to treat anxiety.

You may hear clonazepam called by its brand name, Rivotril®. Clonazepam comes in a tablet form. Some pharmacies will make a liquid form.

Before giving clonazepam to your child...

Tell your doctor if your child has an allergy to clonazepam, any ingredient in this medication, or any other benzodiazepines

Talk with your child's doctor or pharmacist if your child has any of the following conditions. Precautions may need to be taken with this medicine if your child has:

- liver disease
- kidney disease
- glaucoma
- long-term breathing problems

How should you give your child clonazepam?

Follow these instructions when you give your child clonazepam:

- Give clonazepam exactly as your doctor or pharmacist tells you.

- Talk to your child's doctor before you stop giving this medicine for any reason. Your child may become ill if he or she stops taking this medicine suddenly.
- Give clonazepam at the same times every day. Pick times that are easy for you so that you do not miss doses.
- Give with or without food. Give it with food if it upsets the stomach.
- If your child is taking liquid clonazepam, shake the bottle well. Measure the dose with the special spoon or syringe the pharmacist gave you.
- Do not give your child grapefruit or grapefruit juice at any time while your child is taking clonazepam.

What should you do if your child misses a dose of clonazepam?

- Give the missed dose as soon as you remember.
- If it is almost time for the next dose, skip the missed dose. Give the next dose at the regular time.
- Do not give your child two doses to make up for one missed dose.

How long does clonazepam take to work?

It may take several weeks to see the full effect of this medicine.

What are the possible side effects of clonazepam?

Your child may have some of these side effects while he or she takes clonazepam. Check with your child's doctor if your child continues to

have any of these side effects, and they do not go away, or they bother your child:

- drowsiness
- dizziness or feeling lightheaded
- dry mouth
- slurred speech

Call your child's doctor during office hours if your child has any of these side effects:

- unusual changes in behaviour
- anxiety
- rash
- muscle weakness
- uncontrolled body movements

Most of the following side effects are not common, but they may be a sign of a serious problem. Call your child's doctor right away or take your child to Emergency if your child has any of these side effects:

- worsening or new types of seizures
- trouble breathing
- changes in heartbeat
- severe weakness
- severe drowsiness

What safety measures should you take when your child is using clonazepam?

Keep all appointments at the clinic or doctor's office so that the doctor can check how your child is responding to clonazepam. The doctor may need to change the dose to make sure that your child is getting the right amount.

Check with your child's doctor or pharmacist before giving your child any other medicines

(prescription, non-prescription, herbal, or natural products).

Clonazepam may make your child dizzy, drowsy, and less alert than normal. Watch carefully when your child is doing something that he or she needs to be alert for, such as climbing stairs. School work may be more difficult for your child and you may need to discuss this with his/her teacher.

What other important information should you know about clonazepam?

Keep a list of all medications your child is on and show the list to the doctor or pharmacist.

Do not share your child's medicine with others and do not give anyone else's medicine to your child.

If your child has a dry mouth, chewing sugarless gum or sucking sugarless candy or pieces of ice may help.

Make sure you always have enough clonazepam to last through weekends, holidays, and vacations. Call your pharmacy at least 2 days before your child runs out of medicine to order refills.

Keep clonazepam tablets and liquid at room temperature in a cool, dry place away from sunlight. Do NOT store it in the bathroom or kitchen.

Do not keep any medicines that are out of date. Check with your pharmacist about the best way to throw away outdated or leftover medicines.

Keep clonazepam out of your child's sight and reach and locked up in a safe place. If your child takes too much clonazepam, call the Ontario Poison Centre at one of these numbers. These calls are free.

- Call 416-813-5900 if you live in Toronto.
- Call 1-800-268-9017 if you live somewhere else in Ontario.
- If you live outside of Ontario, call your local Poison Information Centre.

Disclaimer: The information in this Family Med-aid is accurate at the time of printing. It provides a summary of information about clonazepam and does not contain all possible information about this medicine. Not all side effects are listed. If you have any questions or want more information about clonazepam, speak to your healthcare provider.

