



Ciprofloxacin

This leaflet gives you information about the possible side effects that using an antibiotic called ciprofloxacin may cause.

What is ciprofloxacin?

It is a 'fluoroquinolone antibiotic' used to treat serious and life-threatening infections.

An antibiotic is a medicine used to treat or prevent infections caused by bacteria.

A fluoroquinolone antibiotic may be used to kill bacteria to treat certain serious infections when other antibiotics are unsuitable.

They work by blocking protein in the bacteria that they need to reproduce, leading to the bacteria dying.

While fluoroquinolone antibiotics, such as ciprofloxacin are valuable for treating serious infections, they are linked to rare but potentially severe side effects that you should be aware of.

When would I be given ciprofloxacin?

Antibiotics are carefully chosen based on the type of infection you have, or in some cases, infections we are trying to prevent. Your individual circumstances are also important when choosing the antibiotic, for example, if you have any known allergies, so it is vital that we have **the correct and most up-to-date information about you. Please discuss any allergies you have with your healthcare professional.**

How should I take them?

Ciprofloxacin is usually taken orally (by mouth) once or twice a day.

Dairy products (e.g. milk or yoghurt) or food/drinks with added calcium, iron and magnesium may reduce how well ciprofloxacin is absorbed by the body. So, you should take ciprofloxacin at least 1-2 hours before or at least 4 hours after consuming dairy products.

What are the side effects?

Although most patients have no or few side effects while taking ciprofloxacin, a few patients may develop serious side effects that involve tendons, muscles, joints and nerves. Symptoms may include swelling, burning, tingling, numbness or weakness of the tendons. Swelling and injury of the tendons may occur within 48 hours of starting ciprofloxacin but may even happen several months after stopping the medication. Taking a steroid in addition to ciprofloxacin may increase the risk of tendon problems.

If you experience any of the above symptoms, stop your medication, rest the painful area and let your hospital doctor know immediately.

Remember that serious complications are rare and that there are many benefits of receiving this medication.

What other side effects should I look out for?

- Abdominal (tummy) or back pain.
- Weakness or unusual sensations in your body (such as constant pins and needles, tingling, numbness or burning), especially in your legs or arms.
- Mood changes, severe tiredness, difficulty sleeping and changes in memory.
- Changes in your vision, taste, smell or hearing.
- Lasting diarrhoea or loose stools.

If you experience any of the above symptoms, contact your hospital doctor immediately.

In addition to contacting your doctor, you can also report side effects to the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Authority (MHRA) through the Yellow Card Scheme

<https://yellowcard.mhra.gov.uk/>. You can also view information from the [Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency](#).

What should I do if I am worried about the side effects?

Tell your hospital doctor or speak to the unit / team that is looking after your treatment.

Alternatively, attend the nearest Emergency Department (A&E).

Who may be at a higher risk of side effects from ciprofloxacin?

- If you are over 60 years of age.
- If your kidneys do not work well.
- If you have had an organ transplant.
- If you suffer from depression or mental health problems – as this treatment may cause changes to your mood or behaviour, including confusion, disorientation, anxiety, depression, and suicidal thoughts.

It is therefore important that you discuss any concerns with your healthcare professional before starting treatment.

How likely are these side effects?

From currently available data, it is not possible to calculate exactly how frequently these side effects occur. It is estimated that these side effects occur at least as often as **between 1 and 10 people in every 10,000** who take a fluoroquinolone antibiotic.

STOP taking the antibiotics if you experience any of the side effects listed in this leaflet and contact your hospital doctor or the unit / team looking after you. If you're unable to see your doctor, call 111 for advice.

Why have I been given this leaflet?

You will only be given ciprofloxacin if the experts feel that the benefits of fighting an infection are greater than the potential side effects. This will have been discussed with you.

Early identification of side effects is essential to reduce further complications so it is important that you understand what to look out for.

Please note: You may not notice some changes in your mood and behaviour, so it is very important to tell your friends and family that you are taking these medicines, and that they have rare mood and/or behaviour side effects associated with them – others may notice changes and help you quickly identify any symptoms and that you need to talk to your hospital doctor.

Contacting us

If you have any further questions or need advice about your treatment, please contact the Royal Berkshire Hospital Switchboard via 0118 322 5111 and provide the name of the unit / team responsible for your treatment.

To find out more about our Trust visit www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk

Please ask if you need this information in another language or format.

Written by: N Mahal, Specialist Antimicrobial Pharmacist
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