

## **DRUG INFORMATION: CO-TRIMOXAZOLE ORAL (coe try mox' a zole): BACTRIM**

### **Why is this medication prescribed?**

Co-trimoxazole is a combination of trimethoprim and sulfamethoxazole, a sulfa drug. It eliminates bacteria that cause various infections, including infections of the urinary tract, lungs (pneumonia), ears, and intestines. It also is used to treat 'travelers' diarrhea.' Antibiotics will not work for colds, flu, or other viral infections.

This medication is sometimes prescribed for other uses; ask your doctor or pharmacist for more information.

### **How should this medicine be used?**

Co-trimoxazole comes as a tablet and a liquid to take by mouth. It usually is taken two times a day but may be taken up to four times a day for severe lung infections. Drink a full glass of water with each dose.

Shake the liquid well before each use to mix the medication evenly. Follow the directions on your prescription label carefully, and ask your doctor or pharmacist to explain any part you do not understand. Take co-trimoxazole exactly as directed. Do not take more or less of it or take it more often than prescribed by your doctor.

### **What special precautions should I follow?**

Before taking co-trimoxazole, tell your doctor and pharmacist if you are allergic to co-trimoxazole, diuretics ('water pills'), oral diabetes medications, any sulfa drug, or any other drugs. tell your doctor and pharmacist what prescription and nonprescription medications you are taking, especially methotrexate, phenytoin (Dilantin), warfarin (Coumadin), and vitamins. tell your doctor if you have or have ever had liver or kidney disease, asthma, severe allergies, or glucose-6-phosphate dehydrogenase (G-6-PD) deficiency (an inherited blood disease). tell your doctor if you are pregnant, plan to become pregnant, or are breast-feeding. If you become pregnant while taking co-trimoxazole, call your doctor. plan to avoid unnecessary or prolonged exposure to sunlight and to wear protective clothing, sunglasses, and sunscreen. Co-trimoxazole may make your skin sensitive to sunlight.

### **What special dietary instructions should I follow?**

Co-trimoxazole may cause an upset stomach. Take co-trimoxazole with food.

### **What should I do if I forget a dose?**

Take the missed dose as soon as you remember it. However, if it is almost time for the next dose, skip the missed dose and continue your regular dosing schedule. Do not take a double dose to make up for a missed one.

### **What side effects can this medication cause?**

Co-trimoxazole may cause side effects. Tell your doctor if any of these symptoms are severe or do not go away:

- upset stomach
- vomiting
- loss of appetite

If you experience any of the following symptoms, call your doctor immediately:

- skin rash
- itching
- sore throat
- fever or chills
- mouth sores
- unusual bruising or bleeding
- yellowing of the skin or eyes
- paleness
- joint aches

If you experience a serious side effect, you or your doctor may send a report to the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) MedWatch Adverse Event Reporting program online at <http://www.fda.gov/MedWatch/index.html> or by phone 1-800-332-1088.

Excerpted from <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/druginfo/medmaster/a684026.html>