

Diphenhydramine

Diphenhydramine is an antihistamine that is available over the counter for the relief of red, irritated, itchy, watery eyes; sneezing; and runny nose caused by hay fever, allergies, and the common cold. It can also be used to prevent motion sickness, to induce sleep, and to treat the symptom's of Parkinson's disease. The usual dose of diphenhydramine is 25 to 50 mg taken every 4 to 6 hours. For motion sickness, diphenhydramine is usually taken 30 minutes before departure. For sleep, diphenhydramine is usually taken at bedtime. Many side effects are possible with diphenhydramine use and these include: drowsiness, fatigue, dizziness, headache, dry mouth, difficulty urinating or an enlarged prostate. If these side effects become bothersome, talk to your doctor or pharmacist about options for using other, less sedating antihistamines. Be sure to use caution when driving, operating machinery, or performing other hazardous activities while on diphenhydramine since diphenhydramine may cause dizziness or drowsiness. If you experience dizziness or drowsiness, avoid these activities.

Drug/Disease interactions:

MAOI: If you are taking a monoamine oxidase inhibitor (MAOI) such as isocarboxazid (Marplan), phenelzine (Nardil), or tranylcypromine (Parnate) in the last 14 days do not take diphenhydramine unless directed by your doctor or pharmacist.

Alcohol: Consumption of alcohol or other sedating drugs may intensify the drowsiness and dizziness associated with diphenhydramine, and so it is not recommended that they be used together.

Disease States: Before taking diphenhydramine, read the label on the package carefully regarding precautions with the use of diphenhydramine along with certain medical conditions you may have. Consult your doctor or pharmacist before using diphenhydramine if you have any of the conditions mentioned.

Use in special populations:

Pregnancy category B: This means diphenhydramine is not expected to be harmful to an unborn baby. However, you should generally not take any medications unless you first consult your doctor or pharmacist.

Infants: Are especially sensitive to the effects of diphenhydramine and caution should be used when giving diphenhydramine to children under the age of 6. If diphenhydramine is needed in children under the age of 6, discuss it with your doctor or pharmacist first.

Nursing: The manufacturer does not recommend taking diphenhydramine while nursing a child. Consult your doctor or pharmacist about other options.