

Co-trimoxazole Oral (coe try mox' a zole)
(Septra DS (double strength) oral)

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.

How should this medicine be used?

Co-trimoxazole comes as a tablet to be taken two times a day. Drink a full glass of water with each dose. Follow the directions on your prescription label carefully, and ask your clinician 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 clinician.

What special precautions should I follow?

Before taking co-trimoxazole,

- tell your clinician if you are allergic to co-trimoxazole, diuretics ('water pills'), oral diabetes medications, any sulfa drug, or any other drugs.
- tell your clinician what prescription and nonprescription medications you are taking, especially methotrexate, phenytoin (Dilantin), warfarin (Coumadin), and vitamins.
- tell your clinician 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 clinician if you are pregnant, plan to become pregnant, or are breast-feeding. If you become pregnant while taking co-trimoxazole, call your clinic.
- 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 clinician 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 clinic 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 clinician may send a report to the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) MedWatch Adverse Event Reporting program online [at <http://www.fda.gov/MedWatch/report.htm>] or by phone [1-800-332-1088].

What storage conditions are needed for this medicine?

Keep this medication in the container it came in, tightly closed, and out of reach of children. Store it at room temperature and away from excess heat and moisture (not in the bathroom). Throw away any medication that is outdated or no longer needed. Talk to your pharmacist about the proper disposal of your medication.

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In case of emergency/overdose

In case of overdose, call your local poison control center at 1-800-222-1222. If the victim has collapsed or is not breathing, call local emergency services at 911.

What other information should I know?

Keep any follow up appointments with your clinic. Do not let anyone else take your medication. Your prescription is probably not refillable. If you still have symptoms of infection after you finish the co-trimoxazole, call your clinic.

Brand name(s):

- Bactrim®
- Bactrim® DS
- Septra®
- Septra® DS
- Septra® Grape Suspension
- Septra® Suspension
- Sulfatrim® Pediatric Suspension
- Sulfatrim® Suspension

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