

Women's health medications

*Uses and possible
side effects*



**Ascension
St. John**

This booklet was developed to familiarize you with the most commonly used medications and some of their possible side effects. This booklet does not contain a complete list of all side effects that may occur. If you have additional questions/concerns, please speak with your healthcare provider and/or nurse.

Tips for taking your medications safely

When you are admitted into the hospital, you will be asked about any medications that you are currently taking. It is best to carry a list of your medications and allergies with you at all times. This list should include the medication name, dose ordered, how often and why you take it.

Upon discharge from the hospital, your doctor and/or nurse will discuss the medications you have been taking while you were in the hospital and if you will need to continue taking them after leaving. Keep your medication list available for your doctor to review at your next appointment.



Medications at home

- Always read your medication label. If there is something you don't understand, call your doctor or pharmacist.
- Many medications are available in several different forms (e.g., oral tablet, topical cream and/or ointment, rectal suppository, transdermal patch, etc.). If multiple forms of the same medication are used together, you may be at risk for increased side effects and/or medical complications. Always check with your doctor or pharmacist if you are unsure about their safe use together.
- Read the patient instructions that are given with each medication by the pharmacist.
- Never take someone else's medication. Take only the medications given to you by your doctor.
- Never take your medication in dark/poorly lit rooms to avoid errors.
- Stop taking your medication only after instruction from your physician. It is important that you continue taking your medications as prescribed, even if/when you feel better.
- Keep medications in their original bottles; do not store multiple medications in the same bottle.
- Do not store medications in the bathroom, car, or by the stove; heat and moisture can affect medication effectiveness.
- Store medications in a secure place away from children and pets.
- Check with your pharmacist for the best way to discard outdated and/or discontinued medications.

At the pharmacy

It is best to use the same pharmacy for new prescriptions and/or refills. This gives the pharmacist the ability to have a complete list of all your medications to provide you with better care.

If you must use more than one pharmacy, give each pharmacist a list of all medications you take. This will help them determine drug interactions and safety.

Items to remember

Remember that it is best to keep a list of your current medications and allergies with you at all times. It is also a good idea to keep a copy at home or give one to a family member.

Don't forget to keep the list current. Your doctor or pharmacist can help you if needed. When you are given a new medication, be sure to ask questions to understand why you are taking it. Ask about the medication's benefits and risks.

And remember, even though some medications may be purchased over the counter, it does not mean they are safe to use with your other medications. Check with your doctor or pharmacist before starting anything new.



Opioid medications

Opioids are used for pain that is severe and is not helped by other types of pain medication. Pain medications will not erase pain, but serve to lessen your pain.

Possible side effects of opioids: Constipation, dry mouth, dizziness, nausea, vomiting, sweating, itching, low blood pressure, difficulty urinating, muscle twitching, hallucinations, nightmares, decreased quality of breathing (slow or shallow breathing)

General precautions:

- Use of opioid pain medications are known to:
 - Increase the risk of falls.
 - Impair the safe use of automobiles, heavy machinery, and/or general work requirements.
 - Interact with alcohol, other opioids, and/or other “depressant” medications, such as alprazolam, lorazepam, diphenhydramine, and promethazine, resulting in increased side effects and/or potential danger.
 - Expose patients to tolerance (needing more over time to achieve pain relief), addiction, physical dependency, and/or withdrawal symptoms, such as nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, anxiety, agitation, muscle pain, trouble sleeping, and others.
- If discharged home on opioids, it is important to store the medication in a secure location away from children and pets.
- Opioids are available in different dosage forms (e.g., oral tablets, transdermal patches, and lozenges). If multiple forms of the same medication are used together, you may be at risk for increased side effects and/or danger; always check with your healthcare provider if you are unsure about their safe use together.

☐ **Brand name:** Dilaudid
Generic name: hydromorphone

☐ **Brand name:** Duragesic
Generic name: fentanyl

☐ **Brand names:** MS Contin, MSIR
Generic name: morphine

☐ **Brand name:** Norco
Generic names: hydrocodone, acetaminophen

☐ **Brand names:** Percocet, Endocet, Roxicet
Generic names: oxycodone, acetaminophen

☐ **Brand names:** OxyContin, OxyIR
Generic name: oxycodone

☐ **Brand names:** Ultram, ConZip
Generic name: tramadol

☐ **Other:** _____

Anti-inflammatory medications

- ☐ **Brand names:** Advil, Motrin
Generic name: ibuprofen
Possible side effects: Constipation, diarrhea, dizziness, gas, stomach pain, heartburn, nausea, vomiting, swelling
- ☐ **Brand names:** Anaprox, Naprosyn, Anaprox DS, Aleve
Generic name: naproxen
Possible side effects: Constipation, diarrhea, dizziness, gas, stomach pain, heartburn, nausea, vomiting, swelling
- ☐ **Brand name:** Celebrex
Generic name: celecoxib
Possible side effects: Swelling, dizziness, headache, insomnia, skin rash, upset stomach, diarrhea, nausea, vomiting and cough
- ☐ **Brand name:** Toradol
Generic name: ketorolac
Possible side effects: Heartburn, constipation, diarrhea, upset stomach, headache, nausea, vomiting, drowsiness, dizziness, swelling

Other non-opioid pain medications

- ☐ **Brand name:** Tylenol
Generic name: acetaminophen
Possible side effects: Upset stomach, itching, hypersensitivity reactions
- ☐ **Brand name:** Xylocaine
Generic name: lidocaine
Possible side effects (injection): Pain, irritation at injection site, metallic taste
Possible side effects (topical): Itching, rash, bruising

Laxative medications

Used to treat or prevent constipation.

- ☐ **Brand name:** Colace
Generic name: docusafe
Possible side effects: Abdominal cramping, diarrhea, throat irritation
- ☐ **Brand name:** Miralax
Generic name: polyethylene glycol
Possible side effects: Itching, cramping, diarrhea
- ☐ **Brand name:** Dulcolax
Generic name: bisacodyl
Possible side effects: Abdominal cramping, nausea, diarrhea, burning (if rectal formulation used)
- ☐ **Brand names:** Senokot, Senna-S
Generic names: docusate and senna
Possible side effects: Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal cramping
- ☐ **Brand name:** Milk of Magnesia
Generic name: magnesium hydroxide
Possible side effects: Nausea, diarrhea, unpleasant (chalky) taste

Anti-nausea and stomach medications

Medications that help treat and/or prevent upset stomach (nausea), vomiting, indigestion and acid reflux. Also used to treat motion sickness as well as help with side effects from opioid pain medications and anesthesia.

- ☐ **Brand names:** Gas-X, Mylicon
Generic name: simethicone
Possible side effects: None commonly reported
- ☐ **Brand name:** Protonix
Generic name: pantoprazole
Possible side effects: Gas, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, headache, joint pain
- ☐ **Brand names:** Maalox, Mylanta
Generic names: aluminum hydroxide, magnesium hydroxide, simethicone
Possible side effects: Constipation, abdominal cramping, hemorrhoids, unpleasant (chalky) taste, nausea, upset stomach, vomiting
- ☐ **Brand name:** Reglan
Generic name: metoclopramide
Possible side effects: Drowsiness, dizziness, headaches, trouble sleeping, diarrhea, restlessness, involuntary muscle movements
- ☐ **Brand name:** Metamucil
Generic name: psyllium
Possible side effects: Abdominal cramping, bloating, constipation, diarrhea
- ☐ **Brand name:** Protonix
Generic name: pantoprazole
Possible side effects: Gas, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, headache, joint pain
- ☐ **Brand name:** Pepcid
Generic name: famotidine
Possible side effects: Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, constipation, dizziness, weakness, headaches, drowsiness
- ☐ **Brand name:** Transderm-Scop
Generic name: scopolamine
Possible side effects: Skin irritations, dizziness, dry mouth, constipation, difficulty urinating
- ☐ **Brand name:** Phenergan
Generic names: promethazine
Possible side effects: Dizziness, drowsiness, dry mouth, confusion, difficulty urinating, constipation, slow/shallow breathing
- ☐ **Brand name:** Zantac
Generic name: ranitidine
Possible side effects: Dizziness, headache, upset stomach, constipation, diarrhea, vomiting
- ☐ **Brand name:** Prilosec
Generic name: omeprazole
Possible side effects: Stomach pain, gas, nausea, upset stomach, vomiting, diarrhea, headache
- ☐ **Brand name:** Zofran
Generic name: ondansetron
Possible side effects: Headache, constipation, diarrhea, drowsiness, dizziness

Antibiotic medications

Used to treat or prevent bacterial infections. Often used before and/or throughout surgical procedures (and sometimes given to take home after leaving the hospital).

- ☐ **Brand name:** Ancef
Generic name: Cefazolin
Possible side effects: Upset stomach, vomiting, diarrhea, loss of appetite, yeast infection
- ☐ **Brand name:** Augmentin
Generic names: amoxicillin and clavulanate
Possible side effects: Nausea, upset stomach, vomiting, diarrhea, yeast infection, skin rash or itching, white patches or sores inside your mouth or throat
- ☐ **Brand name:** Cipro
Generic name: ciprofloxacin
Possible side effects: Upset stomach, vomiting, diarrhea, headache, nausea, yeast infection
- ☐ **Brand name:** Cleocin
Generic name: clindamycin
Possible side effects: Upset stomach, vomiting, diarrhea, metallic taste, yeast infection
- ☐ **Brand name:** Flagyl
Generic names: metronidazole
Possible side effects: Dizziness, headache, diarrhea, nausea, metallic taste, vomiting
Precautions: Must not be used in combination with alcohol, including mouthwash and/or cough medicine.
- ☐ **Brand name:** Keflex
Generic name: cephalexin
Possible side effects: Nausea, upset stomach, vomiting, diarrhea, yeast infection
- ☐ **Brand name:** Macrobid
Generic name: nitrofurantoin
Possible side effects: Headache, nausea, upset stomach, vomiting, diarrhea, urine discoloration (dark yellow or brown)
- ☐ **Brand name:** Neosporin
Generic names: bacitracin, neomycin, and polymyxin B
Possible side effects (topical ointment): Burning, redness, or irritation at the application site
- ☐ **Brand name:** Pen G
Generic name: penicillin
Possible side effects: Nausea, upset stomach, vomiting, diarrhea, skin rash, itching
- ☐ **Brand name:** Rocephin
Generic name: ceftriaxone
Possible side effects: Diarrhea, skin rash, pain/irritation or warmth at injection site
- ☐ **Brand name:** Unasyn
Generic names: ampicillin and sulbactam
Possible side effects: Nausea, upset stomach, vomiting, diarrhea, yeast infection.
- ☐ **Brand name:** Vancocin
Generic name: vancomycin
Possible side effects: Stomach pain, upset stomach, vomiting, flushing, rash

Anxiety medications

Used to treat anxiety and/or panic attacks.

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Brand name: Ativan
Generic name: lorazepam
Possible side effects: Confusion, mood changes, hallucinations, drowsiness, dizziness, decreased quality of breathing (slow/shallow breathing) | <input type="checkbox"/> Brand name: Versed
Generic name: midazolam
Possible side effects: Drowsiness, nausea, vomiting, confusion, decreased quality of breathing (slow/shallow breathing) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brand name: Lexapro
Generic name: escitalopram
Possible side effects: Lightheadedness, drowsiness, headache, nausea, upset stomach, vomiting, diarrhea, dry mouth, decreased sex drive, trouble sleeping | <input type="checkbox"/> Brand name: Xanax
Generic name: alprazolam
Possible side effects: Dizziness, drowsiness, dry mouth, confusion, decrease quality of breathing (slow/shallow breathing) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brand name: Prozac
Generic name: fluoxetine
Possible side effects: Trouble sleeping, headache, anxiety, diarrhea, decreased sex drive, weakness, nausea, upset stomach | <input type="checkbox"/> Brand name: Zoloft
Generic name: sertraline
Possible side effects: Nausea, upset stomach, decreased sex drive, headache, dizziness, increased sweating, dry mouth, loss of appetite or weight loss, diarrhea, drowsiness, stomach cramping, trouble sleeping |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brand name: Valium
Generic name: diazepam
Possible side effects: Drowsiness, dizziness, confusion, decreased quality of breathing (slow/shallow breathing) | |

Blood pressure and heart medications

Used to lower blood pressure, decrease rapid heartbeat, reduce the risk of heart attack and/or stroke, remove excess fluid, relieve chest pain and pressure, and protect the kidneys.

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Brand name: Aldomet
Generic name: methyldopa
Possible side effects: Drowsiness, blurred vision, confusion, dizziness, headache, dry mouth, decreased sex drive | <input type="checkbox"/> Brand name: Procardia
Generic name: nifedipine
Possible side effects: Constipation, cough, dizziness, flushing, headache, heartburn, muscle cramping, nausea, upset stomach, nervousness, weakness, swelling, drowsiness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brand name: Apresoline
Generic name: hydralazine
Possible side effects: Headache, nausea, upset stomach, vomiting, diarrhea, constipation, dizziness, flushing, loss of appetite | <input type="checkbox"/> Brand name: Trandate
Generic name: labetalol
Possible side effects: Dizziness, nausea, upset stomach, vomiting, weakness, decreased sex drive, drowsiness |

Insulin

Used to lower high blood sugar.

- ☐ **Brand name:** Levemir
Generic name: Insulin Detemir
- ☐ **Brand names:** Novolin N, Humulin N
Generic name: Insulin NPH
- ☐ **Brand name:** Novolog
Generic name: Insulin Aspart
- ☐ **Brand name:** Novolin R, Humulin R
Generic name: Insulin Regular

Miscellaneous medications

- ☐ **Brand name:** Cytotec
Generic name: misoprostol
Possible side effects: Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea
- ☐ **Brand name:** Hemabate
Generic name: carboprost tromethamine
Possible side effects: Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea
- ☐ **Brand name:** Methergine
Generic name: methylergonovine maleate
Use: To help control bleeding and to improve muscle tone in uterus after childbirth
Possible side effects: Nausea, upset stomach, vomiting, stomach pain, diarrhea, dizziness, leg cramps, sweating, mild headache, ringing in ears, stuffy nose, unpleasant taste in mouth, changes in blood pressure (low or high), slow or fast heart rate.
- ☐ **Brand name:** Singulair
Generic name: montelukast sodium
Use: To relieve itching associated with anesthesia
Possible side effects: Nausea, upset stomach, headache, drowsiness, stomach pain, diarrhea, heartburn, sore throat, tooth pain
- ☐ **Brand name:** Trans-Derm Scope
Generic name: scopolamine patch
Use: To prevent nausea and vomiting caused by anesthesia during surgery
Possible side effects: Drowsiness, dizziness, dry mouth, dry eyes, itching, mild rash, constipation, urinary retention, sedation
Note: When removing the patch, wrap it in tissues or paper to avoid exposing anyone to the remaining medication on the patch. Contact with the exposed adhesive layer should be avoided to prevent getting on your fingers – temporary blurred vision and dilation of pupils may result if scopolamine comes in contact with the eyes. Wash your hands and area behind ear thoroughly to remove any traces.
- ☐ **Brand name:** Pitocin
Generic name: oxytocin
Use: To help control bleeding after childbirth
Possible side effects: Nausea, upset stomach, vomiting, more intense contractions of uterus

Maternity care medication

Used to relieve skin irritation, discomfort to nipples from breastfeeding, or discomfort from hemorrhoids and/or episiotomies (surgical incision during birthing process).

- ☐ **Brand name:** Analpram HC
Generic name: hydrocortisone and pramoxine
Possible side effects: Skin irritation/itching, dry skin, burning sensation
- ☐ **Brand name:** HPA Lansinoh
Generic name: lanolin cream
Possible side effects: Skin irritation
- ☐ **Brand name:** Tucks
Generic name: witch hazel pads
Possible side effects: None commonly reported
- ☐ **Brand name:** Dermoplast
Generic name: benzocaine
Possible side effects: Skin irritation

Newborn medication

Given to newborn babies.

- ☐ **Brand name:** NA
Generic name: erythromycin
Use: Applied to newborn's eyes to prevent serious eye infection (from bacteria that may be present in a mother's birth canal).
Possible side effects: Eye irritation and/or sensitivity
- ☐ **Brand name:** Engerix-B, Recombivax HB
Generic name: Hepatitis B vaccine (recombinant)
Use: Hepatitis B is a serious disease that infects and damages the liver. For prevention, the CDC recommends that all babies receive the Hepatitis B vaccine at birth.
Possible side effects: Soreness at the injection site, fever, severe allergic reactions are rare
- ☐ **Brand name:** Mephyton (vitamin K injection)
Generic name: phytonadione
Use: Newborns are born with only a small amount of vitamin K, which is needed for blood clotting. For this reason, they are given an injection of vitamin K soon after birth to prevent bleeding.
Possible side effects: Soreness at the injection site, fever, severe allergic reactions are rare
- ☐ **Brand name:** NA
Generic name: Ampicillin
Use: Antibiotic used to treat bacterial infections
Possible side effects: Rash, diarrhea, upset stomach, allergic reaction
- ☐ **Brand name:** Sweet-Ease, TootSweet
Generic name: sucrose
Use: To provide short-term pain relief during minor procedures such as heel sticks, circumcision, and vaccinations.
Possible side effects: None commonly reported
- ☐ **Brand name:** NA
Generic name: Gentamicin
Use: Antibiotic used to treat bacterial infections
Possible side effects: Rash, diarrhea, upset stomach, allergic reaction

Prevention of preterm labor

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| <p><input type="checkbox"/> Brand name: NA
Generic name: magnesium sulfate
Use: To prevent preterm labor, to treat or prevent seizures due to complications of pregnancy
Possible side effects: Flushing, sweating, blurred vision, drowsiness, depressed reflexes, muscle weakness</p> | <p><input type="checkbox"/> Brand name: Procardia
Generic name: nifedipine
Possible side effects: Skin irritation
Use: To treat preterm labor contractions and/or control high blood pressure in pregnancy
Possible side effects: Headache, dizziness, drowsiness, nausea, upset stomach, flushing, feeling warm</p> |
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Sleep medications

- ☐ **Brand name:** Ambien
Generic name: zolpidem
Possible side effects: Flushing, sweating, blurred vision, drowsiness, depressed reflexes, muscle weakness

Steroids

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|---|---|
| <p><input type="checkbox"/> Brand name: Celestone
Generic name: betamethasone
Use: to mature fetal lungs for surfactant production
Possible side effects: Increased blood sugar, increased appetite, nausea, upset stomach, increased blood pressure, fluid retention</p> | <p><input type="checkbox"/> Brand name: Decadron
Generic name: dexamethasone
Possible side effects: Skin irritation
Use: to mature fetal lungs for surfactant production
Possible side effects: Increased blood sugar, increased appetite, nausea, upset stomach, increased blood pressure, fluid retention, vaginal burning sensation</p> |
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Vitamins and minerals

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| <p><input type="checkbox"/> Brand names: Centrum, Chromagen, Prenatal (and many others)
Generic name: multivitamin or prenatal vitamin with or without iron
Use: To support the body's normal growth and development, help build strong bones, and aid in increasing low levels of vitamins and minerals
Possible side effects: Constipation, nausea, upset stomach, vomiting, diarrhea</p> | <p><input type="checkbox"/> Brand names: Feosol, Slow FE
Generic name: ferrous sulfate
Use: To help treat anemia
Possible side effects: Constipation, nausea, upset stomach, dark colored stools, temporary staining of teeth (liquid preparations only)</p> |
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