Medication Information

Diltiazem
(Dil – tye – a – zem)

Other names for this medication

Cardizem®
Tiazac®

There are many other names for this medication.

How this medication is used

This medication is used to prevent chest pain, also called angina.
It works by relaxing the blood vessels. This allows more blood to go to your heart. The more blood that goes to the heart, the more oxygen the heart gets. This helps your heart work better.

This medication is also used to treat high blood pressure.

How to take this medication

Take this medication exactly as directed by your health care provider. It is best to take this medication on an empty stomach, but it can be taken with food.

This medication must be taken regularly, even if you feel well.
Do not suddenly stop taking this medication without checking with your health care provider first.

CD, ER, XL or LA capsule or tablet: Swallow whole. Do not crush or chew any diltiazem medications labelled CD, ER, EX or LA. These medications release diltiazem slowly.

If you miss a dose of this medication, take it as soon as possible. However if it is almost time for your next dose, skip the missed dose and go back to your regular time. Do not take 2 doses at one time.

While taking this medication you may notice

- headache
- feeling very tired
- swelling of ankles, feet or lower legs
- dizziness
- nausea or loss of appetite
- changes in taste
- constipation
- runny or stuffy nose

To avoid feeling dizzy, get up slowly when you have been sitting or lying down. If you feel dizzy, sit or lie down until you no longer feel dizzy, then get up slowly.

To prevent constipation, eat food high in fibre, drink 6 to 8 glasses of liquid each day and exercise regularly. Food high in fibre includes whole grain products, vegetables and fruit.

Contact your health care provider if you notice

- breathing problems
- a very slow heart beat
- your heart beat is faster or slower than usual
- continued chest pain
- severe loss of appetite