

Medication Information Card

Lithium (Lith – ee – um)

Other names for this medication

Carbolith[®]
Duralith[®]
Lithane[®]
Lithium Citrate

There are many other names for this medication.

How this medication is used

This medication helps keep your mood even. It helps balance chemicals in the brain.

It may take 1 to 3 weeks before you get the full effect of this medication.

If you are pregnant or thinking about getting pregnant, talk to your doctor or health care provider about the risks and benefits of taking this medication.

How to take this medication

Take this medication exactly as directed by your doctor or health care provider. It must be taken regularly, even if you feel well.

This medication is usually taken with food to avoid an upset stomach.

How to take this medication (continued)

This medication comes in 2 products:

- short-acting
- long-acting, also called slow-release or extended-release.

Tablets or Capsules: Swallow whole. Do not crush, break or chew.

Syrup or Liquid: Drink the liquid. It can be mixed with juice, but be sure to drink all of the juice.

You need to have blood tests to measure the amount of Lithium in your blood. Your doctor may adjust your dose of Lithium after your blood tests. Do not take more of this medication without talking to your doctor or health care provider first.

If you miss a dose of this medication, take it as soon as possible. However, if it is within 4 hours (about 6 hours for extended-release or slow-release capsules) of your next dose, skip the missed dose and go back to your regular dosing schedule. Do not take 2 doses at one time.

Drink 8 to 12 glasses of water each day.

Do not change the amount of salt in your diet unless your doctor tells you to.

Until you know how this medication affects you, do not drive or operate machinery.

While taking this medication you may notice

- increased thirst
- increased urine
- weight gain
- acne
- slight muscle weakness
- a fine tremble in your hands
- upset stomach
- occasional loose stools
- occasional vomiting
- abdominal pain

Contact your doctor or health care provider if you notice

- slurred speech
- problems with vision
- increased nausea and vomiting
- unusual tiredness, weakness or drowsiness
- watery stools or diarrhea more than 2 times a day
- trembling or shaking

If you cannot reach your doctor, health care provider or psychiatrist, go to the nearest Emergency Department right away. These signs may mean that your dose is too high and needs changing.