

Bicillin® L-A

benzathine benzylpenicillin tetrahydrate

Consumer Medicine Information

What is in this leaflet

This leaflet answers some common questions about Bicillin L-A. It does not contain all the available information. It does not take the place of talking to your doctor or pharmacist.

All medicines have risks and benefits. Your doctor has weighed the risks of you receiving Bicillin L-A against the benefits they expect it will have for you.

If you have any questions about receiving this medicine, ask your doctor or pharmacist.

Keep this leaflet.

You may need to read it again.

What Bicillin L-A is used for

Bicillin L-A is used to treat infections in different parts of the body caused by bacteria. Bicillin L-A is also used to prevent certain infections such as rheumatic fever. Bicillin L-A will not work against infections caused by viruses such as colds or flu.

Bicillin belongs to the group of penicillin antibiotics. It works by killing bacteria or preventing their growth. This particular type of Bicillin is called Bicillin L-A because it is long-acting. It is supplied in a syringe for once-only use.

Your doctor may have prescribed Bicillin L-A for another purpose.

Ask your doctor if you have any questions about why Bicillin L-A has been prescribed for you.

This medicine is available only with a doctor's prescription.

Before you are given Bicillin L-A

When you must not be given it:

Do not have Bicillin L-A if you have an allergy to:

- any medicine containing benzathine benzylpenicillin
- any of the ingredients listed at the end of this leaflet
- any other similar medicines such as other penicillin antibiotics
- cephalosporins. You may have an increased chance of being allergic to Bicillin L-A if you are allergic to cephalosporins.

If you are not sure, check with your pharmacist.

Some of the symptoms of an allergic reaction may include:

- shortness of breath
- wheezing or difficulty breathing
- swelling of the face, lips, tongue, throat, or other parts of the body
- rash, itching or hives on the skin
- chills and fever, joint pain, weakness or feeling faint.

Do not have Bicillin L-A if the expiry date on the pack has passed or if the packaging is torn or shows signs of tampering.

If it is expired or damaged, Bicillin L-A should be returned to the pharmacist for disposal.

If you are not sure whether you should be given this medicine, talk to your doctor.

Before you are given it

Tell your doctor if you have allergies to any other medicines, foods, preservatives or dyes.

Tell your doctor if you have or have had any of the following medical conditions:

- asthma
- hives
- hay fever
- kidney or liver disease.

Tell your doctor if you are pregnant or plan to become pregnant or are breast-feeding.

Your doctor can discuss with you the risks and benefits involved.

If you have not told your doctor about any of the above, tell them before you are given Bicillin L-A.

Taking other medicines

Tell your doctor if you are taking any other medicines, including medicines you buy without a prescription from a pharmacy, supermarket or health food shop.

Some medicines may interfere with Bicillin L-A. These include:

- Tetracycline antibiotics
- Probenecid.

These medicines may affect how well it works. You may need to take different amounts of your medicine

or you may need to take different medicines.

Your doctor or pharmacist has more information on medicines to be careful with or avoid while being given this medicine.

How Bicillin L-A is given

Follow all directions given to you by your doctor or pharmacist carefully.

They may differ from the information contained in this leaflet.

Bicillin L-A is usually only given by a doctor, pharmacist or nurse. It is injected into a muscle. For adults this is usually the buttocks. With small children it may be the thigh. It must not be injected near an artery or nerve. It should not be injected in front and to the side of the thigh. If the injection is repeated, a new site must be chosen.

How much to be given

Your doctor will decide what dose and how many times you will receive Bicillin L-A. This depends on your infection and other factors, such as your weight.

How long to be given it

Sometimes only a single dose of Bicillin L-A is needed for the treatment or prevention of certain infections.

While you are being given Bicillin L-A

Things you must do

Tell your doctor if the symptoms of your infection do not improve within a few days, or if they become worse.

If you develop itching with swelling or skin rash or difficulty breathing after you have been given Bicillin L-A, contact your doctor immediately as these are symptoms of an allergic reaction.

Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you develop severe diarrhoea, even if it occurs several weeks after you have stopped receiving Bicillin L-A.

Diarrhoea may mean that you have a serious condition affecting your bowel. You may need urgent medical care.

Do not take any diarrhoea medicine without first checking with your doctor.

If you get a sore white mouth or tongue after you have been given Bicillin L-A, tell your doctor. Also tell your doctor if you get vaginal itching or discharge.

This may mean you have a fungal infection called thrush. Sometimes the use of Bicillin L-A allows fungi to grow and the above symptoms to occur. Bicillin L-A does not work against fungi.

If you are about to be started on any new medicine, remind your doctor and pharmacist that you are being given Bicillin L-A.

Tell any doctors, dentists or pharmacists who treat you that you have been given Bicillin L-A.

If you are going to have surgery, tell the surgeon or anaesthetist that you are being given this medicine.

It may affect other medicines used during surgery.

If you become pregnant while you are being given this medicine, tell your doctor immediately.

If you are about to have any blood or urine tests, tell your doctor that you are being given this medicine.

Bicillin L-A may affect the results of some tests, including tests measuring glucose (sugar) in the urine.

Keep all of your doctor's appointments so that your progress can be checked.

Things to be careful of

Contact your doctor immediately if:

- you experience any symptoms of an allergy
- you have severe pain in the muscle where your Bicillin L-A injection was given.

Be careful driving or operating machinery until you know how Bicillin L-A affects you.

Bicillin L-A generally does not cause any problems with your ability to drive a car or operate machinery. However, as with many other medicines, Bicillin L-A may cause dizziness, drowsiness, or tiredness in some people.

In case of overdose

If you are given too much (overdose)

It is unlikely that you will receive an overdose as Bicillin L-A as it is most likely to be given to you under the supervision of your doctor.

Immediately telephone your doctor or the National Poisons Centre (telephone 0800 POISON or 0800 764 766), or go to accident and emergency at your nearest hospital, if you think that you or anyone else may have been given too much Bicillin L-A. Do this even if there are no signs of discomfort or poisoning.

Symptoms of an overdose may include seizures and/or unusual muscle movement, for example, waves of rippling along the muscle.

You may need urgent medical attention.

Side Effects

Tell your doctor or pharmacist as soon as possible if you do not feel well while you are being given Bicillin L-A.

This medicine helps most people with certain bacterial infections, but it may have unwanted side effects in some people.

All medicines can have side effects. Sometimes they are serious, most of the time they are not. You may need medical attention if you get some of the side effects.

If you are over 65 years of age you may have an increased chance of getting side effects.

Do not be alarmed by the following list of side effects. You may not experience any of them.

Ask your doctor or pharmacist any questions you may have.

Tell your doctor if you notice any of the following and they worry you:

- feeling anxious, nervous or experience tremors
- sleepiness or tiredness
- nausea or vomiting
- excessive or abnormal sweating
- muscle or joint pain
- oral thrush - white, furry, sore tongue and mouth
- vaginal thrush - sore and itchy vagina and / or vaginal discharge.

Tell your doctor as soon as possible if you notice any of the following:

- stomach cramps
- fast or irregular heartbeat
- frequent infections (symptoms such as fever, severe chills, sore throat or mouth ulcers)
- swollen glands in the neck, armpit or groin
- bleeding or bruising more easily than normal
- blood in stool
- weakness of muscles

- numbness, tingling or weakness of the arms and legs
- injection site reaction, which may include pain, irritation, swelling, redness, or bruising
- impotence or persistent painful erection of the penis which occurs without sexual arousal
- blurred vision, blindness.

The above list includes serious side effects that may require medical attention.

Tell your doctor immediately or go to accident and emergency at your nearest hospital if you notice any of the following:

- severe blisters and bleeding in the lips, eyes, mouth, nose or genitals
- itchy spots accompanied by fever and feeling unwell
- allergic reaction e.g. shortness of breath, wheezing or difficulty breathing, swelling of the face, lips, tongue or other parts of the body, rash, itching or hives on the skin
- severe agitation, confusion and hallucinations
- heart attack, symptoms may include chest or shoulder pain, tightness of chest, shortness of breath
- rapid, shallow breathing, cold, clammy skin, a rapid, weak pulse, dizziness, weakness and fainting
- stroke (collapse, numbness or weakness of the arms or legs, headache, dizziness and confusion, visual disturbance, difficulty swallowing, slurred speech and loss of speech)
- seizures, fits or convulsions
- severe diarrhoea, usually with blood and mucus, stomach pain, fever. This may occur during treatment or several weeks after treatment with Bicillin L-A
- kidney disease, with blood in the urine or pass little or no urine.

The above list includes very serious side effects. You may need urgent medical attention or hospitalisation

You may not experience any of them.

Some people may get other side effects whilst receiving Bicillin L-A.

Do not take any diarrhoea medicine without first checking with your doctor.

Tell your doctor if you notice anything else that is making you feel unwell, even if it is not on this list.

Ask your doctor or pharmacist if you do not understand anything in this list.

After being given Bicillin L-A

Storage

Bicillin L-A is usually stored by your doctor or pharmacist.

If you are storing Bicillin L-A, keep it where young children cannot reach it.

Bicillin L-A must be kept in a refrigerator (2-8°C). Do not keep it in the door of the refrigerator, or the freezer.

Bicillin L-A may be stored outside of refrigerated storage but below 30°C, for a single period of up to 2 months, prior to expiry. The date the product is placed outside of refrigerated storage and stored below 30°C should be written in the space provided on the carton. After storage outside of refrigeration, the product cannot be returned to refrigerated storage and should be discarded.

Disposal

Your doctor, pharmacist or nurse should dispose of the Bicillin L-A syringe and any leftover contents after use. Do not handle or re-use the syringe.

Further information

This is not all the information that is available on Bicillin L-A. If you have any more questions or are not sure about anything, ask your doctor or pharmacist.

Date of Preparation

This leaflet was revised on 5 November 2020.

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Product description

What it looks like

Bicillin L-A is supplied as a prefilled syringe containing a thick white liquid in packs of 10 syringes.

Ingredients

Bicillin L-A 1,200,000 Units/2.3 mL syringe contains 1,200,000 Units equivalent to 1016.6 mg of the active ingredient, benzathine benzylpenicillin tetrahydrate in 2.3 mL.

It also contains the following inactive ingredients:

- sodium citrate
- carmellose sodium
- lecithin
- povidone
- methyl hydroxybenzoate
- propyl hydroxybenzoate
- water for injections.

Sponsor Details

Bicillin L-A is supplied in New Zealand by:

Pfizer New Zealand Limited

P O Box 3998

Auckland 1140

New Zealand

Toll Free Number: 0800 736 363