

Hydromorphone

Names	The generic drug name is hydromorphone (hye-droe-MOR-fone). Brand names include Dilaudid® and Exalgo®. There may be other names for this medication.
How Do I Take This Medication?	Hydromorphone is usually taken by mouth as a tablet or a liquid. If it upsets your stomach, take it with food or milk. Follow the directions on the prescription label. Do not take more medicine than your doctor has prescribed. This drug is also available as a solution that can be injected under the skin, into a vein, or into a muscle.
Why Am I Taking It?	Hydromorphone is used to treat moderate to severe pain.
How Does It Work?	Hydromorphone is an opioid (narcotic) analgesic. It works by decreasing the brain and nervous system's response to pain.
What Should I Tell My Doctor Before I Begin?	<p>Tell your doctor if you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• are allergic to lactose, hydromorphone, other opioid analgesics, other medicines, sulfites, foods, dyes, or preservatives• have had a recent head injury, a brain tumor, seizures, depression, mental problems, or severe curvature of the spine• have or have ever had low blood pressure; Addison's disease; seizures; any condition that causes difficulty urinating (enlarged prostate or narrowing of the urethra); or gallbladder, pancreas, liver, thyroid, or kidney disease.• have lung disease or breathing problems• are breastfeeding, pregnant, or trying to get pregnant• are taking benzodiazepines (Xanax®, Valium®, etc.), muscle relaxers, sedatives, tranquilizers, or other opioid medications <p>This drug may interact with other medications besides those listed or cause harmful side effects. Tell your doctor and pharmacist about all prescription or over-the-counter medications, vitamins, herbal, or diet supplements that you are taking.</p>

How Do I Store and Dispose of Hydromorphone?

- 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 light and excess heat and moisture (not in the bathroom).
- If this medication has expired, or if your provider told you to stop taking it, do not toss it in the garbage or flush it down the toilet. • Roswell has drug disposal containers available on the 1st floor of the main hospital. They are located just past the ATM on the left. New York has *Take Back* programs for the collection of household drugs. Go to the NY Department of Conservation website www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/67720.html and click on “Find a free collection site near you”.
- **If there is an urgent need to dispose of your medication and there are no drop off locations near you, follow these instructions:** Mix whole pills (do not crush or open) in water and add salt, dirt, ashes, or cat litter. Do not hide them in food. Place mixture in a bag, box, or plastic tub that you can seal. Secure the container with strong tape. Place the sealed container in your trash as close to trash collection day as possible.

What Are Some Possible Side Effects?

- Loss of appetite, nausea, and/or vomiting
- Dry mouth
- Constipation
- Drowsiness, lightheadedness, and/or dizziness
- Flushing and/or sweating
- Itching or rash
- Headache and/or mood changes

How Can I Manage These Side Effects?

- Ask your doctor about medication to prevent and treat constipation.
- To help avoid constipation, eat high fiber foods and drink at least 2-3 quarts of fluid every 24 hours, unless you are instructed otherwise. It also helps to keep moving! If you become constipated, ask your doctor about if you can take a laxative.
- Using lotion may relieve itching. Keep the area clean.
- If nausea or itching lasts more than 1 week, talk to your doctor.
- To help avoid dizziness when you change positions quickly, get out of bed slowly. Rest your feet on the floor for a few minutes before you stand up.
- Ice chips, drinking plenty of water, and rinsing your mouth with an alcohol-free mouthwash may help with a dry mouth.

When Should I Call the Doctor?

Call 911 or go to the nearest hospital emergency department if you have:

- any sign of an allergic reaction: itching, hives, swelling in your face or hands, swelling or tingling in your mouth or throat, chest tightness, trouble breathing, dizziness, or fast/pounding heartbeat (palpitations)
- any sign of an overdose: difficulty breathing, excessive sleepiness, hallucinations, fainting, weak muscles, cold, clammy skin, slow heartbeat (pulse) or a bluish color in your skin, fingernails, lips, or around your mouth
- seizures

Call your doctor as soon as possible if you have the following less serious side effects:

- constipation
- lightheadedness, sleepiness, or drowsiness that does not go away
- nausea that does not go away or any episodes of vomiting

What Else Should I Know About Hydromorphone?

- If you have been taking hydromorphone for an extended period of time, do not stop taking it suddenly. Your doctor may need to decrease your dose gradually to prevent withdrawal symptoms.
- Do not share this medication with anyone else.
- Take this medication exactly as prescribed by your provider.
- **This drug may cause drowsiness or dizziness.** Do not drive a car, operate heavy machinery, or participate in other possibly dangerous activities until you know how it affects you.
- Tell your doctor if your pain is not well controlled, or if you have new or a different type of pain.
- If you are having surgery, including dental surgery, tell the doctor or dentist that you are taking hydromorphone.
- Do not drink alcohol while on this medication.
- If you would like more information about hydromorphone, talk to your doctor or pharmacist.